

COUNTRY LIFE

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SPEAIGHT,

LADY SMILEY AND HER CHILDREN.

157, New Bond Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH'S LAND POLICY.

WHETHER we agree or not with the views propounded by the Duke of Marlborough in the open letter to his cousin, Mr. Winston Churchill, which he contributed as a series of articles to the *Daily Mail*, everybody will admit that he has taken a very admirable course. He is not one of the many who are adamant to the arguments of those who hold that there are grievances to be remedied, but has set himself with heart and mind to think out what can be done to improve the conditions in rural England. He puts his ideas before the country in so reasonable a form and with so complete an absence of party prejudice that statesmen would be very unwise if they did not give them very careful consideration. It will, we think, be universally admitted that his criticism of the policies already propounded is destructive. Indeed, it could not well be otherwise. There is no body of men in this country, either Conservative or Liberal, who can claim at once that they have formulated a land policy and that they can command the support of a majority. It would almost appear that the

most impossible reformers alone are definite in what they propose. There is no doubt, for instance, about the single-taxers. They have formed a policy which is nothing more nor less than a scheme for nationalising the land, and they go on propounding it with supreme indifference to any opinions except their own, even although the policy has been formally and in set words rejected by the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other members of the Government. When it comes to practical matters, everybody seems to have a nostrum and no one a cure.

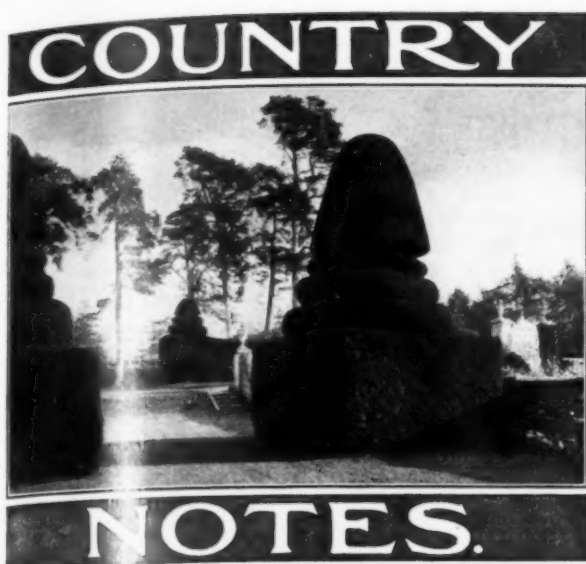
Let us look at the proposals of the Duke of Marlborough and see what he has to say. He begins by rejecting as impractical most of the schemes put forward. The elimination of the landlord, he considers, would lead to a much more expensive cultivation of the land, and, therefore, to dearer food and ultimate disaster. He is in favour of raising the wages of rural labour, but not of instituting a minimum wage. In regard to the last mentioned, he points out that one of its probable effects would be that landowners, to save their labour bill, would put more land under pasture. And, of course, it is impossible to forecast the final results of a measure like this. He does not like the term "land court" either, and enters upon an analysis of the meaning of the word rent which might very well be enlarged. There is undoubtedly much misunderstanding in regard to the profits made in the cultivation of agricultural land. Rents during the great depression which began at the end of the seventies were depreciated by something like forty per cent. In very many cases they were obliterated altogether and tenants were asked to cultivate the soil at a merely nominal rent or sufficient to meet the tithe charges. Since the new prosperity dawned they have certainly not risen to anything like their former level; but the subject wants very careful investigation. Some authorities put the average rent of agricultural land in Great Britain at less than £1 per acre, and the most extravagant do not place it higher than 25s. If a landowner out of that has to keep up the estate, maintain its efficiency, drain, fence and build, there can be very little left. There are few estates in this country in which a great deal of capital has not been sunk, and the return more often than not yields next to nothing on it. Among farmers there are a few exceptional men who are either very clever at their work or have specialised and are thus able to make a considerable profit; but the vast majority are in reality very much worse off than members of the various professions. If we take two hundred acres as the average size of a farm, we shall be reasonably correct if we estimate that the income derived from it is not more than £200 annually. Men who are making this could easily make more in other walks of life. They remain because they like the outdoor existence, the sport and so forth.

In regard to the cottage question the Duke of Marlborough recognises a great cleavage. We gather that he thinks that landlords should build cottages upon their estates for their own servants; but he goes on to say: "They cannot provide for the postmen, policemen, railwaymen and road-workers settled on the land." He might have added the village tradesmen and their like. But with this difference established, the question is very much simplified and ought not to be impossible of solution. We do not quite follow the Duke when he recommends a standardised cottage. After all, we must give some attention to the amenity of the country-side, and it would not be pleasant to see the same type of cottage appearing everywhere. Moreover, an attempt to regulate the type of country cottage according to hard-and-fast rules would inevitably lead to scamped work in building them. A minimum of accommodation and a minimum of land are in reality the two essentials to be enforced. Let anyone compare some of those long terraces of houses which may be seen in the counties of Oxford and Wilts with the detached cottage placed in its own little garden, and he will readily appreciate how much more pleasure is to be obtained from living in the one than from living in the other. He will also see that the man who is, as it were, planted in the midst of his own garden enjoys the substantial advantage of being better able to grow food for his family.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR portrait illustration is of Lady Smiley and her three children. Lady Smiley is the youngest daughter of Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny and Lady Champion de Crespigny, and married Sir John Smiley in 1904.

* * It is particularly requested that no permission to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



ANOTHER Bill dealing with rural housing has been introduced in the House of Commons. It is entitled: "A Bill to provide for the better housing of the working classes in rural areas." Mr. Fletcher introduced it, and he was supported, among others, by Mr. Beville St. John and Mr. Jesse Collings. It is an attractive measure, but must be numbered with those proposals by means of which cottages "can" be built; whereas what the situation requires is a Bill by means of which they "must" be built. It would be a good thing if those engaged in attempting to solve this problem would get into their heads the difference between the two words we have put in quotation marks. It would, among other things, help to crystallise some of the vague and misty ideas which are current about helping the agricultural labourer. One point is that already mentioned—the absolute provision of sufficient cottages; the other is the elimination of casual labour and day-to-day engagements. A very good authority has calculated that in the South of England sixty per cent. of the agricultural labourers are engaged at daily or weekly notice. Now, it is a very fine ambition, and one deserving that pains should be taken to realise it, that all this labour should be brought under longer and more regular engagements. By the Bill it is proposed that each cottage should have at least an eighth of an acre of land with it—a most desirable arrangement, but any shorter engagement than twelve months would be fatal to the effective cultivation of land. This prolonged contract would secure for labour something analogous to that definition of tenure which the tenant regards as absolutely indispensable.

Not much positive fault will be found with the Milk Bill of Mr. John Burns, of which the text was issued on Saturday. It is drafted on reasonable grounds, and evident care has been exercised not to make its operation too oppressive. Nevertheless, if carried through Parliament, it must inevitably involve a considerable amount of new drainage and rebuilding and adjustment which severally and collectively mean expense on many farms. And we cannot help wondering what the effect will be on the local sale of milk in the country. It is much to be regretted that in those districts from which milk is sent to large towns there is a great difficulty in procuring a local supply of milk for the cottagers. The dairy-farmer naturally looks upon his contract as the most important part of his business, and has very little ambition to do a retail trade in pennyworths of milk to the labourers. As a consequence, many country families never have any fresh milk at all, but have to be content with tinned milk. Even that they cannot afford to purchase of the best quality from reputable firms, but to a large extent buy machine-skimmed milk imported from abroad. Over this there is to be some control, but that will scarcely alter a state of affairs to which Mr. Burns apparently has not yet given his full attention. A chief aim of legislation should be to ensure for labourers and their children a reasonable supply of pure milk at a price which they can afford.

The appointment, by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, of an official guide to conduct parties of visitors round the collections of plants and museum specimens at Kew should prove a welcome innovation, and of considerable educational value. A weekly programme of the morning and afternoon tours has been prepared, so that students of particular subjects will be able to select those days that are likely to be most

beneficial to them. In gardens of such large dimensions it is often difficult to find those plants or museum specimens most required, and even when found it is not always easy to ascertain the most interesting features about them. A nominal fee has been authorised for each tour, and precautions will be taken to prevent unauthorised persons attaching themselves to the party.

It would be difficult to invent a fitting epitaph for the late Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, who died shortly after midday on March 31st, at Rome. He was in the modern world of finance what Julius Cæsar or Alexander the Great or Napoleon Bonaparte was in military matters. Starting with great advantages, for both his father and his grandfather were mighty men in American finance, he had clearness of vision, ready appreciation of the facts of every case that came before him, and extreme force of will, and became rich beyond the dreams of avarice. Yet it was impossible to apply to him those easily enunciated formulæ which condemn the accumulation of wealth. He used his resources wisely and prudently. His charities were vast, both in their number and their magnitude. They were confined to no one country and no one class. His public gifts are matter of common knowledge; but his private benefactions were also on a great scale, and applied, as far as ever possible, only to deserving cases. He won equal fame as a collector, and he collected everything—not in a miscellaneous, disorderly manner, but systematically. Nor can it be said that this was done with a selfish aim. Several of his most valuable collections were presented to the countries or places in which in his judgment they would be most valued and useful. England and France have benefited as well as America. Under these circumstances, we can wait for the promulgation of his will with the confidence that the same wisdom which he showed in his life will be exemplified in his testament.

MATINS.

Wild, wild cherry,
As I stand at the foot of the hill,
Why are you only awake of all
The dark trees slumbering still?
Have you no lover but me
That you must lean out so far,
With your delicate nightgown blowing about
To all the winds that are?

Wild, wild cherry,
Nay, 'twas a keener bliss,
A flutter of wings at your window-sill
And a morn too good to miss,
So, behold, we go our ways,
And look, I blow you a kiss,
May the winds be soft to that soul of yours,
And the gods remember this.

H. H. BASHFORD.

Our readers will greatly regret the passing away of Lord Archibald Campbell, brother and heir to the Duke of Argyll. For many years, indeed almost from its foundation, he was an occasional contributor and an unvarying friend to COUNTRY LIFE. His contributions consisted largely of verse, but he also sent many interesting notes about the Spanish galleon sunk at Tobermory, in the exploration of which he was deeply interested. And he communicated much interesting information about Argyllshire, and the neighbourhood of Inverary in particular. He was very keenly interested in the preservation of open spaces in the neighbourhood of London; and although he did not write much for publication on the subject, he was a correspondent always ready with helpful advice when such movements were on foot as that for the preservation of Wimbledon Common. Lord Archibald had inherited not only the literary gift of his father, but a ready sympathy with the literary temperament wherever it found expression. His own leanings were distinctly towards the Celtic revival, and the late William Sharp found in him consistent admiration and support. Lord Archibald leaves one son, who now becomes heir to the Dukedom.

In appointing Dr. Page as Ambassador to Great Britain, Dr. Woodrow Wilson, the President of the United States, has followed a good tradition. London is accustomed to have the United States represented by a man of letters, and Dr. Page is well entitled to this appellation, although his career is described as that of a distinguished journalist. He is fifty-eight years of age and has been connected with some of the foremost publications of America. At one time he was editor of the *Forum* and at another of the *Atlantic Monthly*. At the

present moment he is editor of the *World's Work*. In private life he is known to be a man of the greatest charm, and in his scholastic career won many distinctions. The President, in fact, could scarcely have made a better choice.

The increasing popularity of rock gardening has been well exemplified at the spring shows of the Royal Horticultural Society during the last three years; but visitors have never had such an excellent example put before them as that shown on Tuesday last by the Hon. Vicary Gibbs. Not only was the exhibit in question beautiful to behold, but it served as an excellent object-lesson in the formation of a steep, rocky bank, wherein might be grown many choice alpine plants and dwarf flowering and foliage shrubs. The grey, weathered moss and lichen covered stone might have been there for years, while the small cascade that tumbled over the rocks conveyed an air of reality that is too often absent. Rock garden exhibits have in the past, and not altogether without justification, been criticised on the score that they were unnatural and represented ideas that were impossible to carry out under ordinary conditions, a charge that could not fairly be levelled against this unique and instructive display.

The ordinary citizen who does not pretend to have any knowledge of what is going on in the chancelleries of Europe can hardly fail to be astonished at the extraordinary increase that is contemplated in German armaments. In what is ostensibly a time of peace, levy is made for the immense sum of £52,000,000. No doubt the rise of the Balkan Powers must make an enormous change in Europe, and in particular must throw greater responsibilities upon Austria; but in ordinary circumstances a country which rushed into the enormous expenditure contemplated by Germany would be considered to expect an outbreak of hostilities. On what was called the Penjdeh incident, when Gladstone recognised that there was serious danger of interference by Russia, the vote he asked for was £6,000,000, or not as much as Germany to-day is spending on her air fleet. Due weight may also be accorded to the fact that Russia is a more formidable neighbour to Germany than she was a few years ago. The Government of the Czar has been successful in getting rid of much internal dissension, and it is said that the Russian Army is rapidly recovering from the state in which it was when defeated by Japan. Admittedly it devolves upon Germany to strengthen her frontiers. But even this will not wholly account for the magnitude of her expenditure. The outlay on aircraft alone is bound to cost every country in Europe dear, because where one Power goes others are compelled to follow.

Monday night witnessed the conclusion of one of the keenest battles for the championship at professional billiards of which there is any record. The circumstances were peculiar. Stevenson, admittedly the best player of his day, was out of form last year owing to domestic trouble and other circumstances for which he deserves sympathy. In consequence, Inman was able to wrest from him the title of champion. This year the holder was challenged by Reece, and the interest of the match lay in the very great contrast there is between the styles of the respective players. Inman has made himself a great player by an infinite capacity for taking pains, coupled with the most dogged persistence and unexampled cleverness in safety play. Reece, on the other hand, has a touch of that inborn genius which distinguished Stevenson, John Roberts and his father. He is one of the most graceful and ingenious of players, one, too, of a very inventive mind. His was the discovery of the anchor stroke, a device by means of which a billiard player might go on scoring to eternity were his muscles able to hold out. In consequence it, like the spot stroke, had to be barred. The fight between the two was a splendid one. Inman led during the early part of the game, but was caught up by Reece on Monday afternoon. This only stimulated the champion to greater exertion. He passed his opponent at the same afternoon sitting, and in the evening played irresistibly and won. Popular sympathy was on the side of Reece; but the betting all along was in favour of the winner.

It is disturbing to hear again of a great mortality among the hive bees during the past winter. They seem to have suffered most heavily a little to the south of London. It is disappointing, because there were some hopes that the disease, which seems to have started in the Isle of Wight and was commonly called, from that place of origin, "the Isle of Wight bee disease," had been checked or had exhausted itself. By the light of this later account it would seem that this can hardly be the case. The hives are described as being found to be well supplied with food, yet all the bees in them were dead. Presumably the cause is the same as in the so-called Isle of Wight

pestilence. Of course, it is not only by the loss of the honey and wax, the direct products of the bees, that we suffer, but we also lose the valuable work of the insects in fertilising many species of plants. In that respect it is a loss nearly impossible to estimate.

Most of the rivers have been in fine flood at one date or other during the early spring, and there is no reason to doubt that the salmon have been taking advantage of their opportunities to run up them, so that the future prospects should be good. At the same time, it is not on all stretches of all rivers that a big water early in the season is in the angler's favour. Apart from the question of a flood so heavy as to make the water unfishable, there are reaches which the salmon will run right through, without giving a chance to the fisherman, when the river is high, whereas they would have stayed there and given him sport in rather a lower water.

CAITLIN NI HOULIHAN.

Caitlin ni Houlihan, she's just a little maid,
With her strange eyes half daring you and half afraid;
Now her arms are round your neck, and now away she'll dart—
Caitlin ni Houlihan, she's got me at the heart!

Caitlin ni Houlihan, she's just the greatest queen,
Prouder and more wonderful than ever else was seen;
And to worship her and die for her's a true man's only part—
Caitlin ni Houlihan, she's got me at the heart!

Caitlin ni Houlihan, she's just an ancient crone,
The saddest and the dooDEST that ever wailed her lone;
Grey skies above her and the death-song in her head—
Caitlin ni Houlihan, she makes my tears to start.

Caitlin ni Houlihan, child and queen and eld,
There never yet was faery power that held as hers has held,
With her beauty and her sorrow and her sweet singing art—
Caitlin ni Houlihan, she's got me at the heart!

Caitlin ni Houlihan, I am not of her kin,
And if I knocked upon her door she would not let me in;
But here I stand and long for her the wide sea apart—
Caitlin ni Houlihan, she's got me at the heart!

DOROTHY FRANCES GURNEY.

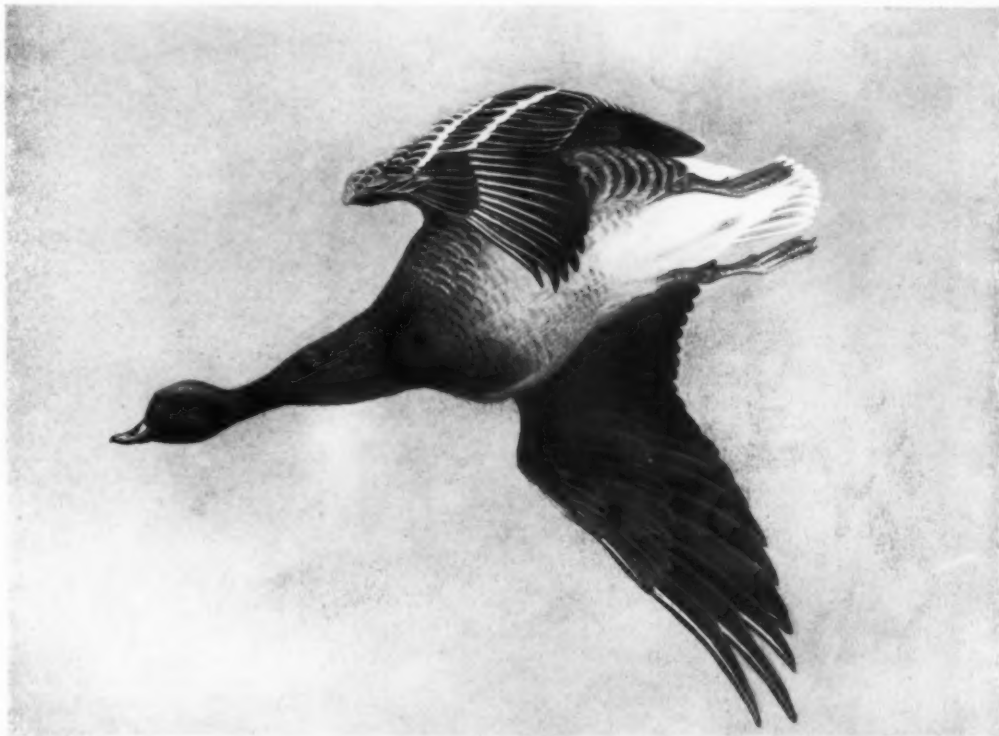
There is a good deal of unrest and discussion at the moment in the high circles of first-class cricket, and it would be singular enough were it not so, considering the rather desperate financial condition of the majority of the county clubs; but as to the exact remedy for that parlous state, opinions differ. We have Mr. Robert Lyttelton and Mr. A. G. Steel, representative of traditions that we all revere, advocating an alteration of the leg-before-wicket rule which would almost surely have the effect of making innings shorter and making cricket brighter. On the contrary, there is Mr. Warner pleading in the interests of the bat—which he is still so very capable of wielding when in his normal health—that the legs constitute a valuable "second line of defence." That is not denied, but what is denied is that it is right that there should be any second line. The bat should suffice. That is the reply of the reformers. But we should like to hear what some of the professional umpires have to say on the question. Would it not complicate their task, which is already delicate, if they were called on to decide whether or not the batsman's legs were encroaching on that wicket-to-wicket line which has been designated the "bowler's territory"? We should like to know their view.

Dr. Field, the Head-master of Radley, has written to the *Times Educational Supplement* such an extremely interesting justification of the "School Corps" that we feel we must quote the most essential passage. He tells us that for thirty years he did not take much interest in the movement; but at Radley now "we have universal service" without compulsion. Dr. Field goes on: "Now for the results. They have, in my judgment, been entirely good. There has been a quickening of activity in the school life, less loafing, new interests, new energy. Masters have thrown themselves into the work with remarkable devotion and at very considerable sacrifice, boys are keen not only in the main work, but also in various subsidiary activities which arise out of it. They spend hours at the short range and win the COUNTRY LIFE competition; they rush up from the boat races and slave at tent-pitching, and two years running win that competition in camp. The notion that training of this sort encourages any spirit of chauvinism or militarism seems to me sheer nonsense."

WILD LIFE IN SOUTH UIST.

OVER the twenty-four hours, more or less, spent on one of David MacBrayne's excellent little steamers, travelling between Oban and Loch Boisdale and back again, we will draw a veil; suffice it to say that to me, at any rate, they were not pleasant! However, my companion, Lord William Percy, who stayed on deck, told me that I missed very little of interest in the birdline, nothing being visible except two great skuas, some gannets, shags, cormorants, razorbills and the usual host of gulls of various kinds. However, once arrived at our destination, every hour was full of interest. We were met at Loch Boisdale Pier by the keeper, who informed us that four strange geese had taken up their abode near the shooting-lodge, and which he thought must be Bean geese. This information filled my companion with interest, as the Bean goose is the only British goose which has not yet fallen to his gun. But alas for our hopes; the geese were soon spied and easily identified through glasses as hybrids between Chinese and grey-lags, and were consequently left in peace. The primary object of our visit was to shoot geese and ducks, and in spite of the fact that the Clerk of the Weather decreed that we should experience days of absolutely still, sunny weather—the very worst for wildfowling—we managed to obtain the following bag in nine days: Four mallards, five wigeons, five pochards, two tufted ducks, five golden eyes, two scaup, three grey-lag geese, ten white-fronted geese and seventy-seven bernicle geese. We found that many of the geese, bernicles especially, were in very poor condition, and this we attributed to the fact that they feed by day and to a great extent on the "machar"—these are smooth mossy

levels between the lochs and the sandhills stretching for some six miles from south to north and along which there is a pathway over which crofters, shepherds and seaweed carts are continually passing, so that the geese seldom get half-an-hour on end in



BEAN GOOSE.

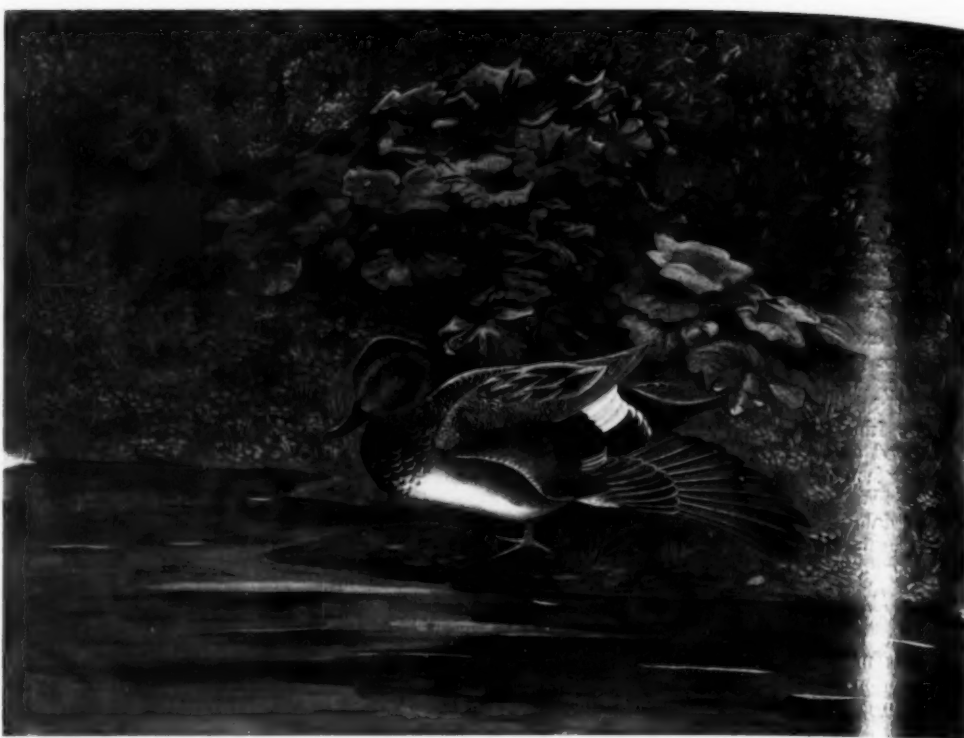
which to feed in peace before they are "moved" by one of these three causes. Though bad for shooting, these calm days were splendid so far as observing ducks was concerned, for one was enabled to watch the movements of the various species on the glassy surface of the lochs far more easily than when the lochs are transformed into miniature seas by the wind. And on more than one occasion I had the great treat of watching the courtship of wild golden-eyed ducks. The males in display utter two distinct notes which I am at a loss to describe and, like nearly all the diving ducks, jerk their heads upwards and backwards so that the back of their heads rests for a second on their backs; at the same time they kick up a little jet of water with one foot.

On the ground rented by my companion there were, roughly, 1,000 bernicle geese, 100 white-fronted and 100 grey-lags. These latter are becoming scarcer every year, not on account of the comparatively few that are shot each season, but because in recent years the crofters have systematically robbed every nest, and very few young birds are now reared on the island. And I greatly fear that the story of South Uist as a home for wild geese is a thing of the past, for there is a scheme on foot to cut the island up into crofts; and what self-respecting goose is going to stay on an island where blasting is going on all day and the place is, to a goose's mind, crowded with men. Even now, as I have said, they get little enough peace.



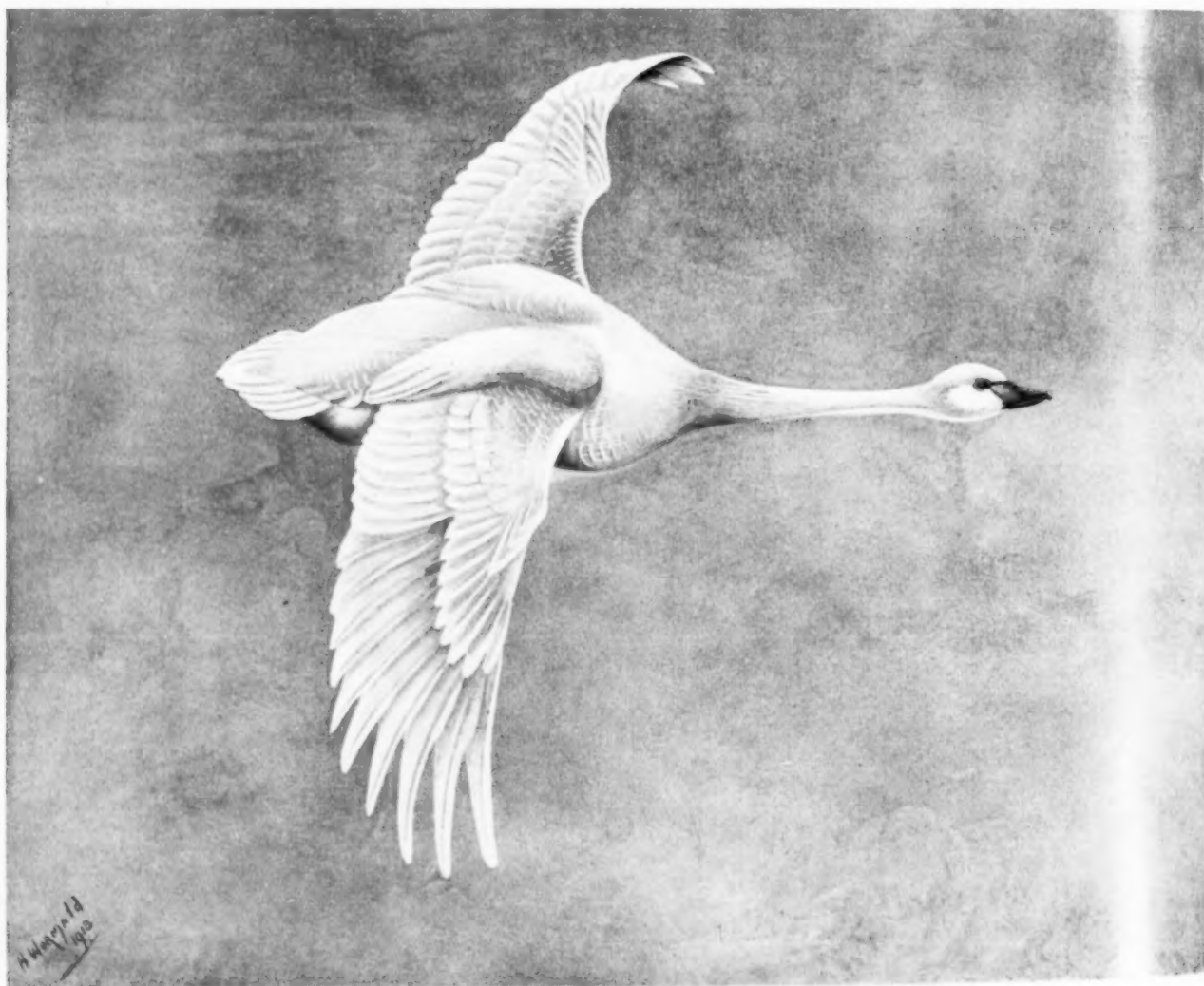
GOLDEN-EYED DUCKS.

To either ornithologist or sportsman there can be no finer sight than a big flock of geese preparing to settle for the night, say some four or five hundred bernicles coming in against the pale blue-green sky above the setting sun on a fairly still, frosty evening, all with their wings "set," one half of the flock just turning against the breeze preparatory to pitching, the other half still sailing with motionless wings down wind. Previous to this visit I had never had the opportunity of stalking wild geese or watching their ways, and the characteristics of the three kinds here represented which struck me most were the comparative folly, tameness or stupidity (whichever one chooses to call it) of the bernicles, the wonderful eyesight and powers of scenting human beings in the grey-lags and white-fronted. (The fact that wild geese can scent human beings is, I believe, admitted by all wild-fowlers, but there are naturalists who will not allow it. Lord William Percy seems to me to have conclusively proved it, for in November of last year he spied two parties of white-fronted geese, one party consisting of birds of the year and the other of adults, so he deliberately put himself in such



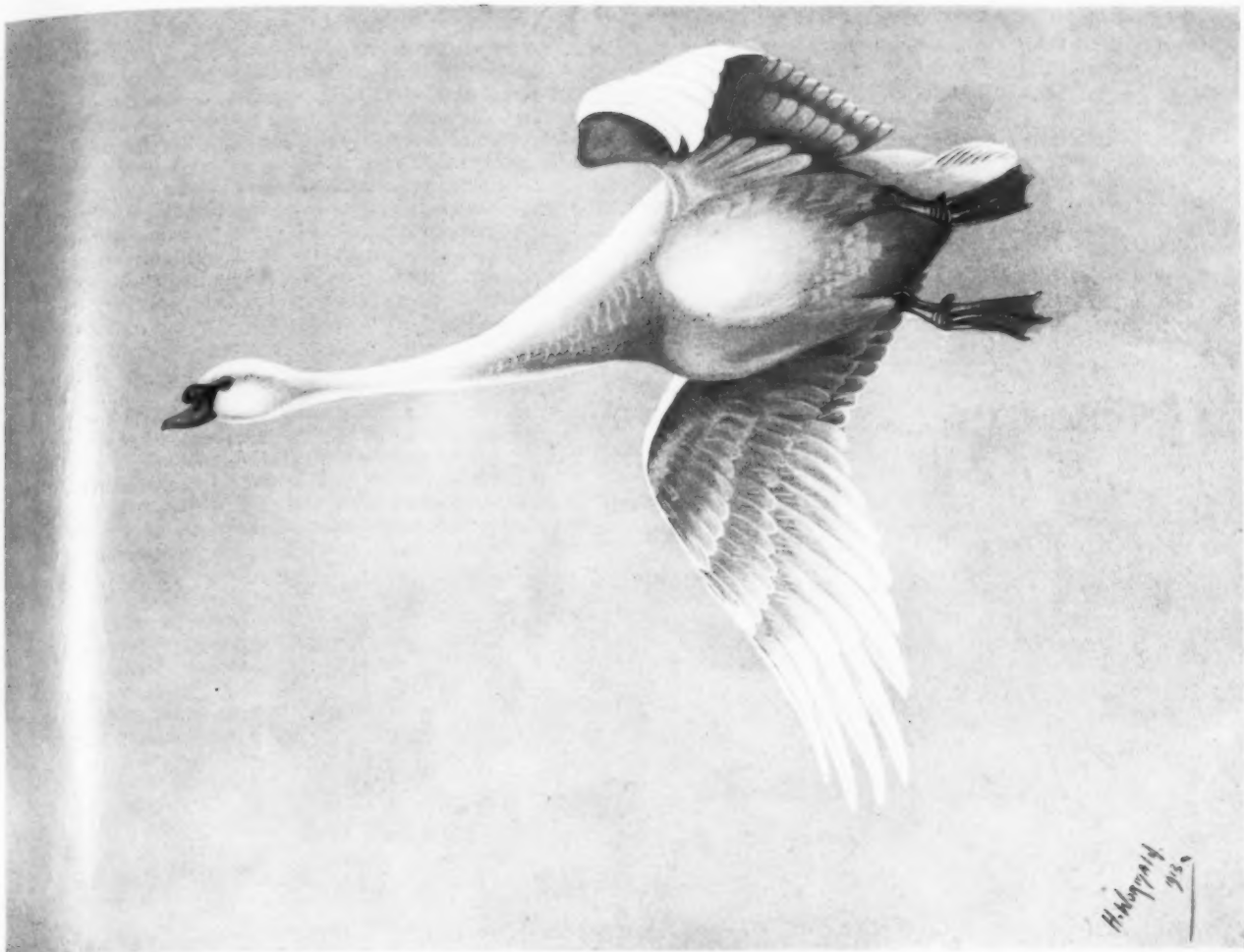
GADWALL.

a position that the young birds should get his hand; these immediately became uneasy and walked away, shaking their heads from side to side, as though they disliked the smell but did not know what it meant, for these birds had only just arrived



WHOOPER SWAN.

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MUTE SWAN.

from their Northern breeding-grounds and had probably never before come into contact with human beings. He then moved so that the party of adults should get his wind; these did not wait an instant, but took wing at once, and were joined by the young birds.) Grey-lags are particularly gifted with marvellous quickness of eye, and once they *think* they have seen something suspicious they never wait to make sure but fly at once; so quick is their eyesight that Lord William Percy, who has probably killed more wild geese than any other amateur, has only once been able to obtain a shot at grey-lags on the ground. There are people, I know, who will say that it is not sporting to shoot a bird on the ground; I can only recommend these to try a little grey-lag-stalking, and when they have realised that they are endeavouring to approach within thirty-five yards (one should not shoot at geese at longer range) of birds gifted with marvellous eyesight, which never feed without at least one sentry, and which rise at the slightest suspicion of danger, I fancy they will change their opinion, or more likely give up the sport in disappointed disgust. Personally, I believe that until they have had several days' practice with powerful glasses they will never so much as see a grey-lag on the ground (unless they happen to see a party pitch), for it is extremely difficult to

distinguish a goose's head and neck (which is frequently all that is visible) from the dead brown grasses and mosses of the bogs on which the grey-lags feed. But the characteristic which struck me most of all was the absolutely amazing power of rising from land or water possessed by the white-fronted. It is almost incredible, until one has seen it, that a bird of this size



RED-BREASTED MERGANSER.

and weight should be able to rise as quickly and as perpendicularly into the air as a teal. Consequently, if one has been lucky enough to crawl and squirm through bogs and over rocks and boulders to within thirty-five yards of white-fronted geese and fire one's right barrel at the neck of a bird on the ground (one perforce is lying full length on one's stomach), it is almost impossible to jump up and get in a second barrel at all before the birds are out of range; and even if one does get in a second shot, it is very apt to be underneath the birds, so rapidly are they rising. Often and often, when one thinks one is going to score off the birds this time, at any rate, and one is squirming along with the wind right and a big boulder or mound between one's self and the geese, they suddenly jump into the air and are gone for no apparent reason. One rises to one's knees and looks about in disgust, only to see the form of a crofter or passing shepherd on the sky-line three hundred yards away—or perhaps one has disturbed a black-faced sheep, which rushes a few yards and turns and stares. Either of these is sufficient to "jump" the geese. Frequently an unnoticed wild duck flies up, quacking loudly, or there is another lot of geese you have not seen, but which see you just as you are crawling round that big stone! But these little disappointments only make one all the keener and the sport of goose-stalking more fascinating.



SHELDRAKE.

Ducks, both surface feeders and divers, are very well represented on the island. Of the former we observed mallard, teal, wigeon, shoveller, gadwall, pintail and shelducks (if one may count these as ducks at all). The diving ducks we noticed were tufted ducks, pochards, golden eyes, scaup, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters and red-breasted mergansers. The long-tailed ducks off the shore are extraordinarily tame, and I waded out at low tide to within fifteen yards of four males and two females, and watched them diving and resting for several minutes, until a seal bobbed up in their midst, when they rose and flew about two hundred yards and settled again. Unlike tufted, pochards, and most others, long-tailed ducks dive with their wings slightly open, as do razorbills. I account for their tameness at this season (the middle of February) by the fact that the shore is always frequented by crofters collecting "kelp," a variety of seaweed which is washed up in vast quantities from November until now, and is collected by the crofters and stacked on low platforms of boulders and left until quite dry, when it is burnt and the ashes are sold as manure at five pounds a ton. The crofters also spread the kelp on the land and plough it in; as far as I could see this is practically the only manure used on the island. Other interesting birds off the shore were great northern divers, but these could only be observed through glasses. We also saw Slavonian grebes and rock pigeons. Small waders are plentiful, chiefly purple sandpipers, redshanks, dunlins, ringed plover, also curlews, whimbrels and oyster-catchers. Ravens and peregrines are common. I saw seven ravens, some hooded crows and great black-backed gulls all congregated round one dead sheep, and my companion witnessed a most interesting sight, which he described to me as follows: "I was sitting by a loch spying for geese when I heard a swish of wings and looked up to see a peregrine stoop at a green plover flying over the loch, which he missed by yards. He stooped several times, each time missing the plover, until I concluded that he was not trying

to hit the plover. I then began to count the number of stoops and got up to twenty-three, when the plover settled on the surface of the loch. I had noticed before that every time the plover tried to leave the loch the peregrine hedged him in over the water again. The peregrine then made two or three attempts to lift the plover off the water; at each attempt the plover splashed, apparently attempting to dive. At last, however, the peregrine caught the unfortunate bird, lifted it off the water and carried it to a rock, where it proceeded to stand on it for fully five minutes without attempting to kill it, the plover beating its wings all the time. I then got up and left." This form of a peregrine's hunting was new to both of us, who had always believed that peregrines killed their prey in fair fight, and very quickly once they had caught their quarry, if it was not struck dead by the force of the stoop. Judging by the quantity of skeletons with wings attached which one came across I judged that peregrines subsist chiefly on curlews in South Uist. Merlin I regret to say, are becoming very scarce on the island for no obvious reason, as I gathered that the birds themselves are never shot, nor are their nests destroyed. There are a few pairs of the beautiful hen harriers on the island, and it was a great pleasure to see the blue-grey adult males with their conspicuous black primary feathers hovering over some doomed vole. These voles, which

are very common, were new to me; they are nearly half the size of a water-vole and reddish brown in colour. The hen harriers are very owl-like in their flight.

There are several pairs of "wild" Shute swans on the lochs and large numbers of Bewick's swans, and I thought I detected two or three whoopers, but could not be certain. All the swans are strictly protected in the shooting leases, an excellent stipulation, though I think the Shutes might be excepted, for the males are very quarrelsome and worry the Bewicks and the geese.

It seems a great pity that this paradise for wild-fowl should be destroyed, for I cannot believe that anybody will profit greatly by the proposed crofts, and I shall always look back upon these nine days both from a naturalist's and a shooter's point of view as the best I

have ever spent, for even when the geese and ducks were unapproachable, one could always take one's glass and watch "the passage of some wild thing." H. WORMALL.

AGRICULTURAL NOTES

THE TRING SALE AND DAIRY SHORTHORNS.

THE record sale of pedigree dairy shorthorns held at Tring on Wednesday last—the sixty-seven head averaged £91 14s. 2d.; the bulls made over £107 each and the females £89—is another proof of the steadily-increasing popularity of the dairy shorthorn. The fact that accurate milk records are kept and officially inspected at Tring, and also that all the animals sold had recently passed the tuberculin test, added greatly to their value. The most striking feature of the sale was the steady prices all through; no extraordinarily high figure was reached; 260 guineas was top price, but there were few, if any, of the lots knocked down for little money. Long or short pedigrees did not rule the selling value so much as dairy characteristics. I well remember being present as a buyer of dairy cows at Mr. Anthony Dobson's sale in Cumberland some sixteen years ago, when I believe the first pedigree shorthorns were bought for Lord Rothschild's herd. At that time to select and give high prices for the most typical dairy cows, regardless of the amount of beef they carried, was regarded as foolish buying. When, too, the Dairy Shorthorn (Coates' Herd Book) Association was started (of which Lord Rothschild was the first chairman), some seven or eight years ago, some shorthorn-breeders ridiculed the new departure, and others regarded it with disfavour as a supposed attempt to split the breed into two distinct types. All this, I am glad to say, has died down. To-day the agricultural world

recognises that it owes a debt of gratitude to those who have revived the dairy shorthorn, and that, so far from damaging the breed, they have greatly enhanced its reputation. The shorthorn has long been recognised as second to none as a beef producer, and now, thanks to the enterprise of a comparatively few breeders, its fame as a dairy breed is firmly established. The dairy shorthorn was in existence before even Coates' Herd Book was started; it is no new breed. For the past hundred years in nearly every shorthorn herd a few good milkers existed, although in many cases their value was not appreciated. Until quite recently breeders of shorthorns only sent fat animals to the shows, as there was no class in which their heavy milkers—which naturally do not carry much flesh when in full profit—stood a chance of getting a prize. As soon as special classes were provided in which shorthorn cows had to yield a stipulated quantity of milk to qualify for a prize, the good pedigree dairy cows came before the public. The publication of milk records further helped to convince the unbeliever that there was a future for the registered shorthorn as a dairy breed. The principal reason why its success was assured was because it is essentially a type of cattle suitable for tenant farmers—it is a commercial breed, and what to my mind is even more important, it is also the sort of cattle that suits the farmer's wife. Many women in England are clamouring to manage the affairs of the nation. The farmer's wife is, generally speaking, contented to manage her husband's home, the dairy and the poultry, provided, of course, that the receipts from the dairy and poultry pass through her hands. This is the one branch of farming where the farmer's wife or daughter can render him valuable assistance. As often as not the wife pays the housekeeping expenses, clothes herself and the children and contributes towards the rent of the farm out of the proceeds of the dairy and poultry. The farmer's wife is like most

women—the more money she handles the better she is pleased. When she is in charge of the dairy, a cow that carries plenty of flesh and is symmetrical does not appeal to her unless it is a good dairy animal. "The master" is sure to be worried until such an one is replaced by a cow that gives a larger return in dairy produce, and he very often elects to buy a dairy shorthorn. Why? The practical farmer knows that in cattle-breeding there are always "misfits" and "damaged stock." Some animals that are misshapen, ugly, or are otherwise a discredit to the herd, are sure to be bred. Some cows become barren, lose a quarter, abort, or for some reason or other must be disposed of. Bearing this in mind, the farmer keeps shorthorns because, unlike most other dairy breeds, there is always a ready market even for "the culls." They can very easily be fattened on the farm, or a customer can be found for them at short notice. Even the surplus bull calves—which are almost valueless in most non-pedigree dairy herds—when they are shorthorns can be weaned and reared as steers at a profit. Until lately most farmers were prejudiced against buying pedigree shorthorns for the dairy. Now their eyes are being opened, and the class of cows to be found at Tring and in many other herds is such as any dairyman would envy. Of course, the ordinary tenant farmer cannot be expected to pay £100 or more for a cow, but he is becoming eager to pick up specimens from pedigree milking herds that cost little money because they possess some little blemish that tells against them in the show-yard. The pedigree dairy shorthorn bull, too, that has been bred on milking lines for two or three generations is now recognised by dairy-farmers as a valuable asset. In fact, so good is the home trade—which is always the most valuable—that even when our ports were closed there was a demand for the pedigree dairy shorthorn.

W.

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

SIR HUGH CLIFFORD, in addition to being a distinguished servant of the Crown, is a writer from whom a new book is always welcome, particularly when it deals with the brown section of humanity. For Sir Hugh has sympathy and understanding, and he is able to present the characters of these people in a way that brings out the differences between them and the whites. This lies to a great extent in difference of moral code. It is a simple and hackneyed statement that morals are manners; but it has a very special application to the subjects of the interesting studies placed before us in *Malayan Monochromes* (John Murray). The first sketch in the book will illustrate our point as well as any other. It represents the author as listening to the tale of an outlaw on the night before he died. In this country Mat Arif would be considered one of the worst of the criminal classes; but it is Sir Hugh's point that under different circumstances the man had come to regard himself as a hero. He is able to watch the approach of death with more composure than his visitor. He had a presentiment that his hour had come, and "Fate no man can stay or alter." He then narrates the story of his career, how he saw and loved Alang, a village beauty, on the day whereon she was married, how he made friends with her husband and persuaded him to visit Arif's native village, the wife accompanying them. He deliberately planned murder, but could not restrain himself until the appointed time, and killed his rival at one of their halting-places. Alang wept, "but soon, very soon, I dried her eyes, and gave her good reason to thank me, in that I had ridded her of a fool." They were betrayed into the hands of justice; but the Sikh constables had to transport their prisoner down a river full of rapids, and the outlaw at a dangerous moment was able to persuade his warders that the man who steered would certainly drown all the company:

Then the Sikh corporal unlocked my fetters, and bade me steer the boat; for the crew, fearing an accident, all declared that I was very cunning in the management of crafts through rapids—which indeed was true. Allah is very good, and He hath made all Sikh men fools, for they pray to a cow, eschew tobacco, and grow their hair long like women: also they undid my fetters.

The result might be foreseen. He took a suitable opportunity of overturning the boat and, seizing the woman and a rifle, made a shift to win to the shore:

On the bank I stood for a moment looking back at the Sikh men struggling in the water, weighed down by their heavy clothes, with their hair afloat like duck-weed, and with such an uproar coming from them that the voices of the rapid were stilled. I was very well pleased, and I jeered them with many pungent words ere I took to the jungle and won free from pursuit.

After this episode he lived happily with his wife long enough

for her to bear him four sons and one daughter. Thus, with composure and satisfaction, he met his death

with the same calm and deliberate indifference with which he had taken the lives of those who had stood between him and his desire—too completely satisfied with himself, and too sublimely conscious of his own rectitude, to entertain the smallest doubt as to his eternal salvation; and supremely contented to lay any blame that might be due as a burden to be borne by the broad shoulders of Fate the immutable.

This is more than a story. It is an illustration of the manner in which standards and ideals spring up under circumstances very different from those under which we are placed, and yet it is all true enough to human nature. The moss-trooper of mediæval times, when he went out to rob and murder, did not feel it inconsistent to repeat his *Ave Maria* and *Pater Noster*. He was only doing what he had been brought up to.

As a relief to this piece of tragedy, let us look at Sir Hugh Clifford's story of two little slave-girls. It illustrates an insidious evil of the Malay Archipelago with which the most enlightened Government finds it very difficult to deal. The Malays for centuries have believed in slave-owning. They used to prey ruthlessly upon the defenceless wild tribes of the far interior, killing those who offered resistance and selling as slaves the weak and timid, the women and the children. They have also a curious system known as debt-slavery:

A man who chanced for the time to be in poor circumstances sought out some rich neighbour and, in consideration of a small loan, voluntarily surrendered himself and his family, and their descendants for ever, as debt-slaves to his creditor or his posterity.

To cut a long story short, the sketch deals with two little girls who had been seized as debt-slaves by a village tyrant. One of them, only nine years old, had that spirit which occasionally comes to women wherever they are, and persuaded her sister to run away, or, rather, get into a boat and float down the river to Pekan, searching for white men to redeem them from captivity. The voyage is very prettily described. Of course, the Malayan children are as much at home on the water as on the land; but they had no idea of the length of the journey, and were both hungry and terrified when they came at last to the Chinese settlement. The reader should read the charming account of their adventures for himself. They ended with the appearance on the scene of a little Malay policeman and they were brought before the Governor:

Later two little draggled and worn-out shreds of humanity were brought into my study; and later still, when they had made the discovery that white men did not eat small children and that I could speak their tongue, they perched one on each of my knees, and, thawed and reassured by the sucking of barley sugar, thus they told to me their tale.

So it all ended happily. Awang Uda, the tyrant, was suitably

punished and the girls restored to their friends. Sir Hugh concludes his account of what surely must have been a personal experience in the following manner:

Lang, when I saw her last, was blossoming into a beauty, while Minah is as dried-up a little chip as ever; but a young lady who knows her own mind as thoroughly as she does can probably secure happiness even though comeliness be lacking.

The British Government works upon a big scale, and does many surprising and wonderful things; but I like to remember that once at least that huge, flint-hearted organism appeared to two little brown children in the light of a foster-mother, to whom they might run fearlessly for comfort and protection.

These are but two examples from a sheaf of fascinating experiences in the Malay Archipelago. The sketches are lightly and amusingly written; but they convey a vivid idea of the languid and yet most vital life of the primitive brown islanders.

THE ETHNOLOGY OF SOUTH AMERICA.

Aborigines of South America. by the late Colonel George Earl Church, edited by an old friend, Sir Clements R. Markham, K.C.B. (Chapman and Hall.)

COLONEL CHURCH is well known to geographers as an eminent authority on South America, the author of an interesting paper on the inland seas of that continent in geological times and of a very important one on its physical geography. He deals briefly with these subjects in the introduction to the present volume before describing the Caraios in Chapter I. The relations of the aboriginal tribes were largely governed by the inland seas, the aggregate area of which was about one million one hundred and fifteen thousand square miles, separating South America into two great divisions, the Brazilian and the Andean. The so-called Brazilian Tupis were in reality Caraios or Caribes and their offshoots. Ethnologists call the latter Tupi-Guaranis, a misnomer, as it is doubtful if ever there was a Tupi or Guarani race. A strong proof as to the original home of the Cariao race is that their language is still found in its greatest purity in Paraguay. The Caribes were their governing class, and as they gradually spread over the continent, conquering as they went, they all became known by this appellation, the Spaniards finally adopting the word "Carib" to designate any cannibal savage, irrespective of race or tribe. There existed an extraordinary number of small tribes and subdivisions of tribes, each of which had their own particular dialect or language spoken only by themselves. There was no cohesion, no united front to an invader, and largely owing to inter-tribal wars the Portuguese had an easy task before them in their conquest of Brazil. Chapters II. and III. deal with the Brazilian coast tribes and the Tapuyas, the aboriginal races who were attacked and driven from their homes by the Caraios. The author then describes the tribes at the foot of the Andes, especially the Chiquitos and Mojos; lowland Amazonia, its tribes, the great rivers flowing from the Andes and the voyages of the early explorers and missionaries. The north-west portion of the Upper Beni River is one of the most healthy and beautiful spots in the world. "No wonder," writes Colonel Church, "that an old friend of mine located the Garden of Eden on the lower slopes of the Sorata." This chapter (VI.), dealing with the eastern slopes of the Andes, is unfinished owing to the fact that the work in that direction was still actively proceeding at the time of the author's death. Chapter VII. is concerned with the Chiriguano, a tribe of warriors who maintained their independence until quite recent times. Their history makes interesting reading, and the sympathies of the reader are entirely with the "heathen," who had good reason to look on Christianity as the open door to slavery and the loss of all they loved best. The last two chapters describe the tribes of the Gran Chaco, the Abipones and the Southern tribes, incidentally touching on the author's personal experience of an Indian raid. "The whole north-western part of Argentina offers a field for ethnological study, probably not exceeded in importance and interest by any other equal area of South America." The habits of the natives, their customs and weapons, particularly the bolas, are described, while some idea of their powers of endurance may be gained from the fact that Colonel Church's Indian canoe-men would average fifty-four strokes a minute for, sometimes, ten hours per day. The author's descriptive powers are vivid and concise, and his volume is a valuable contribution to South American bibliography. It contains his portrait, a biographical notice and a map.

THE IRIS.

The Genus Iris, by William Rickatson Dykes. (Cambridge University Press.)

BEGINNING as an amateur with a keen admiration of irises, and wishing to obtain a more definite knowledge of the genus, Mr. Dykes at first found himself baffled by the confusion in the naming of those commonly known in gardens. To remedy this, and under the impulse of the example and encouragement of the late Sir Michael Foster, he set himself a task of serious and laborious botanical study, including not only a search through all printed matter bearing upon the subject, but also working through all the most important accessible herbaria in England, America and the Continent. The labour was found to be none the less because of the extreme variation not only of the irises in gardens, but also among the species in their native places; examples of this spontaneous diversity being so remarkable that in some cases it was difficult to believe that flowers so extremely unlike could be actually of the same species. The difficulties were also but little enlightened by a study of the works of the earlier botanists, for their writings show both confusion of kinds and general want of distinct information. Even Linnaeus' small collection of twenty-four species—more than a hundred and thirty are now known—do not tally with the written descriptions. Later botanists, notably in Germany, have attempted to systematise the genus, but their methods proved unsatisfactory. They were followed by Baker of Kew and Maximowicz of Petersburg, also by Sir M. Foster among the garden plants, and by Lynch of Cambridge. Mr. Dykes' small popular book on irises, published a little more than a year ago, is already well known and much appreciated by amateurs, but the present volume is a monumental work appealing alike to the botanist and the layman. It is illustrated by forty-six admirable plant portraits by Mr. F. H. Round of some of the more distinctive of the irises. The good paper and beautiful printing of this large folio volume, and the

pleasantly quiet, dignified tone of the whole get-up put the book upon the best plane of production.

NOVELS.

Myles Calthorpe, I.D.B., by F. E. Mills Young. (Lane.)

AMONG the host of novels that appear each season there are a few that justify their existence, and *Myles Calthorpe, I.D.B.*, must be ranked among them. The scene of the story is Natal, just after the war, when business was at its worst, and the future in South Africa looked black for at least ten years. Mr. Young evidently knew his people well and the milieu in which they lived; the most convincing portraits are those of Matt Solomon, the gross, underbred Jew millionaire, who possesses a certain coarse geniality as an offset to an unlovely character, and whose money has come through many unclean channels; contrasted with him is Brummage, Solomon's chief agent. Unscrupulous and cowardly, he is the brains of Solomon, who, without his help, would have been tripped before through sheer clumsiness and lack of imagination. Half tool and half partner of these two is Henry Farrant, the adventurer, in a hurry to get rich, no matter by what means or at what cost to others. *Myles Calthorpe* is employed by Brummage, who does his best to ruin him, and then he drifts into employment with Farrant as his cashier. How *Calthorpe* shields Farrant, Solomon and Brummage at the expense of his own career and of *Joan Farrant's* happiness for the sake of her brother's good name, and how Solomon engineers his own destruction, through a lack of knowledge of human nature, must be left to Mr. Young to tell. It is sufficient that *Joan* and *Calthorpe* emerge from their trial with some capacity for happiness in spite of the scars. The book is remarkable for the courageous and just way in which Mr. Young has handled the sex problem, difficult to solve in the home country, but a Sphinx's riddle, with the penalty of race destruction, in Colonies and Dependencies, ruled by a few white men and peopled by other races.

The Night Nurse, by the author of "The Surgeon's Log." (Chapman and Hall.)

DERMOT FITZGERALD is one of those ambitious men who, on account of their poverty, try to shut love and marriage out of their lives. Until he meets *Nora Townsend*, a nurse in the Dublin hospital of which he is president, he does not realise the futility of his efforts. *Nora* is a rich woman, though he does not know this, and in proposing to her, dreads the thought that he is dooming her to long years of weary waiting. Their engagement has to be kept secret, otherwise one or other would have to leave the hospital. Chivalrously honourable, Dermot is entrapped into an engagement with *Moir Otway*, another nurse who loves him, though he has for her only the feelings of an old friend. The subsequent complications are well worked out. He volunteers to go to "Jocum" to a country doctor struggling with an outbreak of typhus in the winter of Mayo. *Nora* subsequently follows him thither, and learns that he still loves her. Soon after he succumbs to the fever. *Moir* learns from his delicious talk that he really loves *Nora*, purges herself in the bitter waters of renunciation and, on the last page, the lovers are reunited. The success of "The Surgeon's Log" encouraged the author to try his hand at a novel, and, judging by the one before us, he will do better work yet. He has a sense of the dramatic; his characters talk naturally, though the dialogue at times is slightly forced. The author should guard against an inclination to employ purely technical terms where ordinary language would be more suitable. It obtrudes itself on the non-medical reader's attention and hinders the action. Written by a close student of character, the book is full of human feeling, sympathetically rendered. It presents a finished picture of the relationship existing between the individuals of a hospital staff, and claims attention as a novel of unusual interest.

By the Blue River, by Isabel C. Clarke. (Hutchinson.)

"BY THE BLUE RIVER" is an excellent novel. The qualities that distinguish it are a good plot, a thoughtful, sincere and deliberate unfolding of the story, and a style at once clear and individual. The book should attract many readers, for it has the genuine note of a real drama carefully and tolerantly examined and most sympathetically presented. Turning back to the antecedents of *Frances Amory* and her husband, *Aubrey Amory*, in search for light upon the problem of the tragedy that overtakes the young wife and the debonair, self-centred and secretive defaulter, Miss Clarke lays down for us an extremely persuasive line of deduction from which the subsequent actions of husband and wife quite naturally evolve. *Aubrey Amory*, to escape justice, succeeds, while on bail, in fleeing the country. Laying his plans unknown to *Frances*, he obtains from her a promise that she will leave England, retire to Algeria, where she has property inherited from her French mother, from which she derives her personal income, and there await his release. When *Amory's* flight is discovered, *Frances*, shamed and heart-broken, determines to fulfil his wishes. With her son she settles at *Oued Zerqa*, where *Jean de Vernay*, her cousin, is steward. There follow some pleasing and graphic descriptions of life in the French Colony, with the story of *Jean de Vernay's* unsuspected passion for the deserted wife and the strange religious development which makes her son an object of extraordinary interest to the Arab community, who begin to credit him with the powers of a marabout, for which superstitious belief mother and son threaten to pay very dear. The event, however, finds the pair reunited, *Frances* eventually faced with the possibility of a recovered happiness, and *de Vernay's* devotion rewarded. As has been said, this is an excellent novel, and Miss Clarke is a writer whose work deserves high praise.

Requital, by Mrs. J. O. Arnold. (Methuen.)

IT is not unfrequently a somewhat risky experiment when a young woman, who is already half in love with a suitor of her own years, elects to pin her faith to faint liking—with possessions to back it—against love with poverty thrown in. *Beatrice Wyld* is one of these unfortunate people who make a pact with *Mephistopheles* and afterwards protest against his price. Her miscalculations of her own capacity for suffering do not, however, stop short at dissipating her own peace of mind; they irremediably play havoc with that of the elderly ornithologist, *Sir Henry Dacre*, her husband, with results which the reader may discover for himself in the event of his having the luck to find to his hand this quietly interesting and well-written story of a cruel wrong and an unexpected requital.



CHAPTER X.

IS there any church in the world as beautiful as the old church of Riff, with its wonderful flint porch; with the chancel host and crown carved in stone on either side of the arched doorway as you go in; beautiful still in spite of the heavy hand of Cromwell's men, who tore all the dear little saints out of their niches in the great wooden font-cover, which mounts richly carved and dimly painted like a spire, made of a hundred tiny fretted spires, to the very roof of the nave, almost touching the figures of the angels leaning with outstretched wings from their carved and painted hammer-beams. In spite of all the sacrilege of which it has been the victim, the old font-cover with the coloured sunshine falling aslant upon it through the narrow pictured windows remains a tangle of worn mysterious splendour. And the same haggard, forlorn beauty rests on the remains of the carved screen, with its company of female saints painted one in each panel.

On this particular evening Annette was the first to take her seat in the chancel beyond the screen where the choir practices always took place. Mrs. Nicholls presently joined her there with her battered part-book, and she and Annette went over the opening bars of the new anthem, which, like the Riff bull, was "orkerd" in places. Mr. Black was lighting the candles on long iron sticks, while Miss Black adjusted herself to the harmonium, which did the organ's drudgery for it, and then settled herself, note-book in hand, to watch which of the choir made an attendance.

Miss Black was constantly urging her brother to do away with the mixed choir and have a surpliced one. She became even more urgent on that head after Annette had joined it. Mr. Black was nothing loth, but his bishop who had but recently instituted him had implored him not to make a clean sweep of every arrangement of his predecessor, Mr. Jones, that ardent reformer whose principal reforms now needed reforming. So with laudable obedience and zeal Mr. Black possessed his soul in patience and sought to instil new life into the mixed choir. Annette was part of that new life, and her presence helped to reconcile him to its continued existence and to increase Miss Black's desire for its extinction. Miss Black was older than her brother, and had already acquired that acerb precision which lies in wait with such frequent success for middle-aged spinsters and bachelors. She somehow gave the comfortless impression of being "ready made" and "greatly reduced"; as if there were quantities more exactly like her put away somewhere, the supply having hopelessly exceeded the demand. She looked as if she herself as well as her fatigued elaborate clothes had been picked up half-price but somewhat crumpled in the sales. She glanced with disapproval at Annette's whispering amicably with Mrs. Nicholls, and Annette desisted instantly. The five little boys shuffled in in a bunch, as if roped together, and slipped into their seats under Mr. Black's eye. Mr. Chipps, the grocer and principal bass, followed, bringing with him an aroma of cheese. The two altos, Miss Pontifex and Miss Spriggs, from the Infants' School, were already in position. A few late comers seemed to have dropped noiselessly into their seats from the roof, and to become visible by clearings of throats.

Mr. Black, who was chagrined by the very frigid reception and the stale tea which his sister had accorded to Annette, said, with his customary benignity, "Are we all here? I think we may as well begin."

Miss Black remarked that the choir-master, Mr. Spillcock, was "late again," just as that gentleman was seen advancing like a ramrod up the aisle.

A certain mystery enveloped Mr. Spillcock. He was not a Riff man, nor did he hail from Noyes, or Heyke, or Swale, or even Reibenbridge. What had brought him to live at Reibenbridge no one rightly knew, not even Mrs. Nicholls. It was whispered that he had "bugled" before Royalty in outlandish parts, and when Foreign Missions were being practised he had been understood to aver that the lines:

Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand

put him feebly in mind of the scenes of his earlier life. Whether he had really served in the Army or not never transpired, but his grey moustache was twirled with military ferocity, and he affected the bearing and manner of a retired Army man. It was also whispered that Mrs. Spillcock, a somewhat colourless, depressed mate for so vivid a personality, "was preyed upon in her mind"

because another lady had a prior or church claim to the title of Mrs. Spillcock. As a child I always expected the real Mrs. Spillcock to appear, but she never did.

"Good evening all," said Mr. Spillcock, urbanely, and without waiting for any remarks on the lateness of the hour, he seized out of his waistcoat pocket a tuning-fork. "We begin, I presume, with the anthem, 'Now hunto 'Im.' Trebles, take your doh. Doh, me, sol, doh, doh." Mr. Spillcock turned towards the trebles with open mouth, uttering a prolonged falsetto doh, and showing all his molars on the left side, where apparently he held "doh" in reserve.

Annette guided Mrs. Nicholls and Mrs. Cocks and the timid under-housemaid from the Dower House from circling round the note to the note itself.

"Doh" sang out all the trebles with sweetness and decision. "Now then, boys, why don't you fall in?" said Mr. Spillcock, looking with unconcealed animosity at the line of little boys, whom he ought not to have disliked, as they never made any sound in the church, reserving their voices for shouting on their homeward way in the dark.

"Now then, boys, look alive. Take up your doh from the ladies." A faint, buzzing echo like the sound in an unmusical shell could be detected by the optimists nearest to the boys. It would have been possible to know they were in tune only by holding their bodies to your ear.

"They have got it," said Mr. Black, valiantly.

Mr. Spillcock looked at them with cold contempt.

"Altos, me," he said more gently. He was gallant to the fair sex, and especially to Miss Pontifex and Miss Spriggs, one dark and one fair and both in the dew of their cultured youth.

"Altos, take your me."

The two altos, their lips ready licked, burst into a plaintive bleat which if it was not me was certainly nothing else. The miller, the principal tenor, took his sol, supported at once by "the young chap" from the Manvers Arms, who echoed it manfully directly it had been unearthed, and by his nephew from Lowestoft, who did not belong to the choir and could not sing, but who was on a holiday and always came to choir practices with his uncle, because he was courting either Miss Pontifex or Miss Spriggs, possibly both. I have a hazy recollection of hearing years later that he had married them both, not at the same time, but one shortly after the other, and that Miss Spriggs made a wonderful mother to Miss Pontifex's baby, or *vice versa*. Anyhow, they were both in love with him, and I know it ended happily for everyone, and was considered in Riff to be a great example to Mr. Chipps of portly years, who had been engaged for about twenty years "as you might say off and on" to Mrs. Cocks' sister (who was cook at the Dower House), but who, whenever the question of marriage was introduced, opined that "he felt no call to change his state."

Mr. Black made several ineffectual attempts to induce the basses to take their lower doh. But Mr. Chipps, though he generally succumbed into singing an octave below the trebles, had conscientious scruples about starting on the downward path even if his part demanded it, and could not be persuaded to make any sound except a dignified neutral rumbling. The other basses naturally were not to be drawn on to dangerous ground while their leader held aloof.

"We shall drop into it later on," said Mr. Black, hopefully, who sat with them. "We had better start."

"Pom, pom, pom, pom," said Mr. Spillcock, going slowly down the chord and waving a little stick at trebles, altos, tenors and basses in turn at each "pom."

Everyone made a note of sorts, with such pleasing results that it was felt to be unchivalrous on the part of Mr. Spillcock to beat his stick on the form and say sternly:

"Altos, it's hay. Not hay flat."

"Pommmmm!" in piercing falsetto.

The altos took up their note again, caught it as it were with pincers from Mr. Spillcock's back molars.

"Righto," said Mr. Spillcock. "Altos, if you find yourselves going down, keep yourselves *hup*. 'Now hunto 'Im.'"

And the serious business of the practice began.

CHAPTER XI.

THE violet dusk was deepening and the dew was falling as Annette crossed the garden under the apple trees. There was a light in Aunt Maria's window, which showed that she was evidently grappling with the smoking imbroglio which was racking two young hearts. Even a footfall in the passage was apt to scare that shy bird Aunt Maria's genius, so Annette stole on tiptoe to the parlour. Aunt Harriet, extended on a sofa near a shaded lamp, looked up from her cushions with a bright smile of welcome, and held out both her hands. Aunt Harriet was the youngest of three sisters, but she had not realised that that fact may in time cease to mean much. It was obvious that she had not yet kissed the rod of middle age. She had been moderately good-looking twenty years ago and still possessed a willowy figure and a slender hand and a fair amount of ash-coloured hair which she wore in imitation of the then Princess of Wales, tilted forward in a dome of innumerable little curls over a longish, pinkish face, leaving the thin flat back of her head unmitigated by a coil. Aunt Harriet gave the impression of being a bas-relief, especially on the few occasions on which she stood up, when it seemed as if part of her had become momentarily unglued from the sofa, leaving her spinal column and the back of her head behind.

She had had an unhappy and misunderstood—I mean too accurately understood—existence, during the early years when her elder sister Maria ruthlessly exhorted her to exert herself and continually frustrated her mild inveterate determination to have everything done for her. But a temporary ailment, long since cured, and a sympathetic doctor had enabled her to circumvent Maria, and to establish herself for good on her sofa with the soft-hearted Catherine in attendance. Her unlined face showed that she had found her niche in this uneasy world, and was no longer as in all her earlier years a drifter through life, terrified by the possibility of fatiguing herself. Greatly to her credit, and possibly owing to Catherine's mediation, Aunt Maria accepted the situation and never sought to undermine the castle, not in Spain but on the sofa, which her sister had erected, and in which she had found the somewhat colourless happiness of her life.

"Come in, my love, come in," said Aunt Harriet with playful gaiety. "Come in and sit by me."

Her love came in and sat down obediently on the low stool by her aunt's couch, that stool to which she was so frequently beckoned, on which it was her lot to hear so much advice on the subject of housekeeping and the management of the servants.

"Have you had supper, dear child?"

"Not yet. I will go now."

"And did you remember to take a lozenge as you left the church?"

"I am afraid I forgot."

"Ah, my dear! It's a good thing you have someone to look after you and mother you. It's not too late to take one now."

"I should like to go and have supper now. I am very hungry."

"I rejoice to hear it. It is wonderful to me how you can do without a regular meal on choir nights. If it had been me I should have fainted. But sit down again for one moment. I have something to tell you. You will never guess whom we have had here."

"I begin to think it must have been Canon Wetherby, the clergyman who told you that story about the parrot who said 'Damn' at prayers, and made Aunt Maria promise not to put it in one of her books."

"She will all the same. It is too good to be lost. No, it was not Canon Wetherby. But you will never guess. I've never known you guess anything, Annette. You are totally devoid of imagination, and ah! how much happier your life will be in consequence. I shall have to tell you. It was Mr. Reginald Stirling."

"The novelist."

"Yes, and you know Maria was beginning to feel a little hurt because he hadn't called, as they are both writers. There is a sort of freemasonry in these things. But, anyhow, he came at last and he was quite delightful. Not much to look at. Not Mr. Harvey's presence, but most agreeable. And he seemed to know all about us. He said he went to Riff Church sometimes, and had seen our youngest sister in the choir. How I laughed after he was gone. I often wish the comic side did not appeal to me quite so forcibly. To think of poor me, who have not been to church for years, boldly holding forth in the choir, or Maria, dear Maria, who only knows 'God Save the Queen' because everyone gets up—as Canon Wetherby said in his funny way: 'Does not know Pop goes the Queen from God save the weasel.' Maria said afterwards that probably he thought you were our younger sister, and that sent me off into fits again."

"I certainly sit in the choir."

"He was much interested in the house, too, and said it was full of old-world memories."

"Did he really say that?" Annette's face fell.

"No. Now I come to think of it I said that and he agreed. And his visit, and his conversation about Mrs. Humphry Ward, comparing David Grieve and Robert Elsmere, quite cured dear Maria's headache, and we agreed that neither of us would tell you about it in the absence of the other, so that we might make you guess. So remember, Annette, when Maria comes in, you don't know a word, a single word of what I've told you."

Aunt Maria came in at that moment, and sat down on the other side of the fire.

Aunt Maria was a short, sack-like woman between fifty and sixty, who had long since given up any pretensions to middle age, and who wore her grey hair parted under a little cap. Many antagonistic qualities struggled for precedence in Aunt Maria's stout, uneasy face, benevolence and irritability, self-consciousness and absent-mindedness, a suspicious pride and the self-depreciation which so often dogs it, and the fatigue of one who daily and hourly is trying to be "an influence for good," with little or no help from temperament. Annette had developed a compassionate affection for both her aunts, now that they were under her protection, but the greater degree of compassion was for Aunt Maria.

"Aunt Harriet will have told you who has been to see us," she said as a matter of course.

Aunt Harriet fixed an imploring glance on Annette, who explained that she had seen a dog-cart in the courtyard, and how later she had seen Mr. Stirling driving in it.

"I wished, Harriet," said Aunt Maria, without looking at her sister, "that you had not asked him if he had read my books."

"But he had, Maria. He was only doubtful the first minute till I told him some of the names, and then—"

"Then the poor man perjured himself."

"And I thought that was so true how he said to you: 'You and I, Miss Nevill, have no time in our hard-worked lives to read even the best modern fiction.'"

"I found time to read 'The Magnet,'" said Aunt Maria in a hollow voice.

At this moment the door opened and Hodgkins, the parlour-maid, advanced into the room, bearing a tray which she put down in an aggressive manner on a small table beside Annette.

"I am certain Hodgkins is vexed about something," said Aunt Harriet, solemnly, when that functionary had withdrawn.

"I am as sensitive as a mental thermometer to what others are feeling, and I saw by the way she set the tray down that she was angry."

"Perhaps she guessed that Annette was starving," said Aunt Maria.

CHAPTER XII.

THE Dower House stands so near to the church that Janey Manvers, sitting by her bedroom window in the dusk, could hear fragments of the choir practice over the low ivied wall which separates the churchyard from the garden. She could detect Annette's voice taking the same passage over and over again, trying to lead the trebles stumbling after her. Presently there was a silence, and then her voice rose sweet and clear by itself:

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat."

The other voices surged up, and Janey heard no more. Was it possible there really was a place somewhere where there was no more hunger and thirst, and beating, blinding heat? Or were they only pretty words to comfort where no comfort was? Janey looked out where one soft star hung low in the dusk over the winding river and its poplars. It seemed to her that night as if she had reached the end of her strength.

For years since her father died she had nursed and sustained her mother, the invalid in the next room, through what endless, terrible days and nights, through what scenes of anger and bitterness and despair. Janey had been loyal to one who had never been loyal to her, considerate to one who had ridden roughshod over her, tender to one who was harsh to her, who had always been harsh. And now her mother, not content with eating up the last years of her daughter's life, had laid her cold hand upon the future, and had urged Janey to promise that after her death she would always keep Harry, her half-witted younger brother, in the same house with her and protect him from the world on one side and a lunatic asylum on the other. Something desperate had surged up in Janey's heart and she had refused to give the promise. She could see still her mother's look of impotent anger as she turned her face to the wall, could hear still her hysterical sobbing. She had not dared to remain with her, and Anne, the old housemaid, was sitting with her till the trained nurse returned from Ipswich, a clever, resourceful woman who had made herself indispensable to Lady Louisa and had taken Harry to the dentist, always heretofore a matter difficult of accomplishment.

Janey realised with sickening shame this evening that she had unconsciously looked forward to her mother's death as a time when release would come from this intolerable burden which she had endured for the last seven years. Her poor mother would die some day, and a home would be found for Harry, who never missed anyone if he was a day away from them. And she would marry Roger, dear kind Roger, whom she had loved since she was a small child and he was a big boy. That had been her life, in a prison whose one window looked on a green tree; and poor manacled Janey had strained towards it as a plant strains to the light. Something fierce had stirred within her when she saw her mother's hand trying to block the window. That at any rate must not be touched. She could not endure it. She knew that if she married Roger he would never consent that Harry and his attendants should live in the house with them. What man would? She felt sure that her mother had realised that contingency and the certainty of Roger's refusal, and hence her determination to wrest a promise from Janey.

She was waiting for her cousin Roger now. He had not said whether he would dine or come in after dinner; it depended on whether he caught the five o'clock express from Liverpool Street,

but in any case he would come in some time this evening to tell her the result of his mission to Paris. Roger lived within a hundred yards in the pink cottage with the twirly barge-boarding almost facing the church, close by the village stocks.

Janey had put on what she believed to be a pretty gown on his account; it was at any rate a much-trimmed one, and had re-coiled her soft brown hair. The solitude and the darkness had relieved somewhat the strain upon her nerves. Perhaps Roger might after all have accomplished his mission and her mother might be pacified. Sometimes there had been quiet intervals after these violent outbreaks which nearly always followed opposition of any kind. Perhaps to-morrow life might seem more possible, not such a nightmare. To-morrow she would walk up to Red Riff and see Annette, lovely kind Annette, the wonderful new friend who had come into her life. Roger ought to be here if he were coming to dinner. The choir was leaving the church. Choir practice was never over till after eight. The steps and voices subsided. She lit a match and held it to the clock on the dressing-table. Quarter past eight. Then Roger was certainly not coming. She went downstairs and ordered dinner to be served.

It was a relief that for once Harry was not present, that she could eat her dinner without answering the futile questions which were his staple of conversation, without hearing the vacant laugh which heralded every remark. She heard the carriage rumble out of the courtyard to meet him. His teeth must have taken longer than usual. Perhaps even nurse, who had him so entirely under her thumb as a rule, had found him recalcitrant.

As she was peeling her peach the door opened and Roger came in. If there had been anyone to notice it—but no one ever noticed anything about Janey—they might have seen that as she perceived him she became a pretty woman. A soft red mounted to her cheek, her tired eyes shone, her small erect figure became alert. She had not dined after all. She sent for the earlier dishes, and while he ate refrained from asking him any questions.

"You do not look as tired as I expected," she said.

Roger replied that he was not the least tired. There was in his bearing some of the alertness of hers, and she noticed it with a sudden secret uprush of joy in her heart. Surely it was the same for both of them. To be together was all they needed. But oh! how she needed that. How far greater her need was than his.

They might have been taken for brother and sister as they sat together in the dining-room in the light of the four wax candles.

They were what the village people called "real Manverses," both of them, sturdy, well-knit, erect, with short straight noses, and grey, direct, wide-open eyes, and brown complexions, and crisp brown hair. Each was good-looking in a way. Janey had the advantage of youth, but her life had been more burdened than Roger's, and at five-and-thirty he did not look much older than she did at five-and-twenty, except that he showed a tendency to be square set, and his hair was thinning a little at the top of his honest, well-shaped head. He was, as Mrs. Nicholls often remarked, "the very statue of the old squire," his uncle and Janey's father.

"Pray don't hurry, Roger. There is plenty of time."

"I'm not hurrying, old girl," with another gulp.

It was a secret infinitesimal grief to Janey that Roger called her "old girl." A hundred little traits showed that she had seen almost nothing of the world, but he in spite of public school and college gave the impression of having seen even less. There were a few small tiresomenesses about Roger to which even Janey's faithful adoration could not quite shut its eyes. But they were after all only external foibles, such as calling her "old girl," tricks of manner, small gaucheries and gruntings, and lapses into inattention, the result of living too much alone, which wise Janey knew were of no real account. The things that really mattered about Roger were his kind heart and his good business head and his uprightness.

"Never seen Paris before, and don't care if I never see it again," he vouchsafed between enormous mouthfuls. He never listened—at least not to Janey—and his conversation consisted largely of disjointed remarks thrown out at intervals, very much as unprofitable or waste material is chucked over a wall, without reference to the person whom it may strike on the other side.

"I should like to see Paris myself."

Roger informed her of the reprehensible and entirely un-British manner in which luggage was arranged for at that metropolis, and of the price of the cabs and the system of *pourboires*, and how the housemaid at the hotel had been a man. Some of these details of intimate Parisian life had already reached even Janey, but she listened to them with unflagging interest. Do not antiquarians tell us that the extra rib out of which Eve was fashioned was in shape not unlike an ear-trumpet? Janey was a daughter of Eve. She listened.

Presently the servants withdrew, and he leaned back in his chair and looked at her. "It was no go," he said.

"You mean Dick was worse?"

"Yes—no. I don't know how he was. He looked at me just the same, staring straight in front of him with goggling eyes. Lady Jane said he knew me, but I didn't see that he did. I said, 'Holloa, Dick,' and he just gaped. She said he knew quite well all about the business, and that she had explained it to him. And the doctor was there, willing to witness anything: awful dapper little chap, called me *Chair Monsieur* and held me by the arm, and tried to persuade me, but——" Roger shook his head and thrust out his under lip.

"You were right, Roger," said Janey, sadly, "but poor mother will be dreadfully angry. And how are you to go on without the power of attorney if he's not in a fit state to grant it?"

But Roger was not listening.

"I often used to wonder how Aunt Louisa got him to sign before about the sale of the salt marshes—that time when she went to Paris herself—on purpose. But"—he became darkly red—"hang it all, Janey, I see now how it was done."

"She shouldn't have sent me," he said, getting up abruptly. "Not the kind for the job. I suppose I had better go up and see her. Expect I shall catch it."

(To be continued.)

THE SPOOL.

Impressionable Friend!

Six inches this way . . . that way five.

In whose dark walls a hundred phantoms live.

Wherein six films are fixt

Two spools betwixt;

And no more skill to manage them I wist

Than first to "click," then "twist"!

The chemist, if you're busy,

Will do the rest, which makes it all quite easy!

As for the trifling cost of every snap,

Who cares, for this, a rap?

Instantaneously

I and my box of witchery

Our filmy records make, to thrill once more

When, on the tangible, Time locks the door.

Ah! here the swirling river at my feet,

Fringed with primroses sweet!

And there the mountains wrapt in gleaming snow,

A gorse-clad hill, and outlined on its brow

The patient oxen straining to their load,

With tinkling bells

O'er sun-chased fells,

Wending their homeward path adown the rut-worn road.

Something just touched my cheek!

I swear I felt the spray

Flecking the breakers which we rode *that* day.

So, conjure we

For every spool unrolled

One hour of gold!

A life-time memory.

ELIZABETH KIRK.

WILD STAG-HUNTING IN FRANCE.



IN FULL CRY.

HUNTING in France has in the last thirty years seen a great revival, after the long disorganisation consequent upon the Revolution. Little is heard in this country of our Gallic neighbours' sport. Yet the fact remains that at least three hundred and thirty packs of hounds are now hunting various kinds of quarry on French soil. Many of these packs are mastered by descendants of the old nobility; others by country gentlemen, some of whom, as is often the case in England, have acquired fortunes in business and have established themselves upon the land, purchased estates and devoted themselves to a country life. The chase, in fact, in modern France is pursued with almost as much devotion as it is in England. French methods of hunting differ a good deal from our own; the chase is, however, followed with at least as much seriousness and rather more pomp and circumstance than with us, and it is curious to find that in a Republican country the methods of hunting follow much more closely the customs of bygone centuries than is the

case in England. I should, perhaps, make an exception to this statement, bearing in mind the fact that the Devon and Somerset Staghounds still hunt their quarry by methods which obtained in the times of the Tudors.

The principal quarry hunted in France at the present day are wild red deer and roedeer, wild boar, wolf, hare and fox. Foxes, as a rule, are not much hunted with packs of hounds. The Pau Hunt, it is true, are engaged in this form of sport, but as often as not they run "bagmen," the wild animal being not always forthcoming. Some harrier packs—of which there are many—occasionally hunt fox towards the end of the season; but Reynard is at present not regarded with the same respect as a beast of chase in France as in England, and large numbers of these animals are killed at shooting-parties (*chasses à tir*). Wolves grow scarcer than they used to be, and are not so accessible to huntsmen with packs of hounds. Some seven packs of hounds still, however, pursue these animals, when they can find them, devoting themselves to boar, roe or red deer at other times.



THE STAG TAKES SOIL.

In the vast woodland spaces of France—and it is to be remembered that forestry is as much an art in that country as it is in Germany—large numbers of wild red deer, roe and boar find ample shelter. These are all hunted assiduously by French sportsmen. Nearly forty packs of hounds, for example, are devoted to the chase of the fleet and elusive roe, fourteen to boar and roe, and ten others to roe and hare. Sixteen or eighteen packs pursue wild red deer, to the exclusion of all other quarry; twenty-one others hunt red deer and roe alternatively, while about a score more pursue red deer and boar. Thus, nearly sixty packs of hounds in France still hunt red deer either alone or in alternation with roe and boar. Hunting the wild red deer in France is still pursued under exactly the same conditions as those obtaining during the *régime* of the Bourbon Kings. It differs from the method in vogue with the Devon and Somerset Stag-hounds at the present day, in that the harbinger, who locates the resting-place of the deer at early morning, still makes use of a lime-hound, as was the English custom in Plantagenet and Tudor times. On Exmoor the harbinger now goes out alone; in France the *valet-de-limier* goes forth before daybreak, and with his hound held in leash seeks the traces of the deer as they return to covert. Having located a warrantable stag, he returns and makes his report to the Master. In many hunting establishments the ancient system of hunting with three relays is still practised. A few couple of hounds, corresponding to our tufters, are taken to rouse the deer, so soon as its resting-place is shown by the *valet-de-limier*. These hounds are termed *rapprocheurs*. As the hunt proceeds, the rest of the hounds held in relay are uncoupled and join in the pursuit. With some sportsmen, however, it is preferred to lay on the whole pack at once, so soon as the deer has been roused. That the ancient relay system has a good deal in its favour may be gathered from the experience of hunting with the Devon and Somerset Stag-hounds. There the four or five couple of tufters, the steadiest and most reliable

into action. During the hind-hunting season with the Devon and Somerset Stag-hounds, on those short winter days when the stout-running hinds are by no means easy to bring to hand, I think I am right in saying that the Master sometimes keeps up his sleeve, as it were, a few couple of hounds, even after he has laid on most of the main pack. Exmoor hinds are extraordinarily hard to catch, and yield very long and severe



MONSEIGNEUR LE PRINCE MURAT.

runs; and at the end of one of these tough chases it is a comfortable thing to be able to bring out a few fresh hounds and lay on to the now more than half-tired deer, and so end the hunt before the short daylight vanishes. Thus, it will be seen, the system of Exmoor deer-hunting is, in reality, not so far remote from that pursued in French forests as may have been thought.

One respect in which French hounds are perhaps superior to English is that they do not so easily change when fresh deer are put up. French hunting-folk have always made a great point of this with their hounds, and have trained and encouraged them for centuries in every possible way to stick solely to the line of the quarry first roused. It is an admirable trait upon which French sportsmen are much to be congratulated, a trait which is the more valuable when one remembers that so much of the French chase lies in deep woodlands, where hounds must perforce be left to their own devices. As to the class of hound used in France, there is plenty of choice. Some sportsmen, especially those who hunt boar, prefer the English foxhound, whose strength, courage and determination are of great value in this particular chase. The English hound has been crossed a good deal also with French blood, and in that favourite hound, the *bâtard du Haut Poitou*, or cross-bred Haut Poitou, the English strain is especially noticeable. Among purely French strains, the big white and orange Vendéean hound, the grand blue-mottled Gascon hound, and that excellent blend of two old strains, the Gascon-Saintongeais, are perhaps the most valuable. The old Norman hound has been revived by means of a strong cross of the English foxhound. The rough-coated Griffon-Vendéean hound is another fine old



THE MASTER CALLS HOUNDS OFF THE DEAD STAG.

hounds in the pack, find the quarry, drive him from any other deer with which he may be consorting, and usually give him a severe "dusting" before the main body of the pack are laid on. These tufters may be said to correspond, roughly, with the *rapprocheurs* of the French chase. The first relay (*vieille meute*) consists of old and steady hounds which may be trusted to do their work thoroughly before the other relays are brought

race of French hunting hound, hardier and better constituted than the smooth-coated white and orange Vendéean hound, which is now a somewhat delicate strain. Both the Vendéean breeds are descended from the celebrated Royal white hounds of the old French Kings. Other admirable strains are the Cérès, Persac, Pindray and Montembœuf, still to be found among the light-coloured French hounds.

The chase of a good red stag in French woodlands is often a matter of two, and even three, hours before the end comes. There is a great deal of blowing on the big, circular French horns with which the *piqueux* (hunter), *valets-de-chiens* (whips), the Master, and even some members of the Hunt, are equipped. These frequent and vociferous horn-blowings sound very strange to English ears; but it is to be remembered that without

them sportsmen and sportswomen would more often than not be completely "left" in the depths of the interminable forests through which the chase so frequently takes place. French *chasseurs* have a most elaborate code of notes, by which the followers of the Hunt are enabled to tell exactly how the progress of the chase goes. In England we have cut down our hunting calls to perhaps too great a paucity. In France, where woodland hunting constitutes a large proportion of the chase of red deer, roe and boar, the ancient calls, most of which have been carefully preserved from mediæval times, are still found not only useful, but necessary.

The photographs reproduced herewith show excellently well some of the principal phases of French hunting. The Hunt, or *Equipage*, is the Rallye-Chambly, mastered by Prince Murat of the Château de Chambly in the Department of Oise. Prince Murat's Hunt was established some seventeen years since. He maintains thirty-five couple of cross-bred Vendéean-Poitou hounds, which hunt red deer and roe in various large forests in Oise and Seine-et-Oise. Wild boar are



IN THE FOREST OF ERMENONVILLE.
Princesse Murat, Princesse M. Murat, et le Duc d'Elchingen.

also pursued in the forest of Chantilly. The Prince's best red deer country lies in the forests of La Tour-du-Lay, l'Isle-Adam, Camelle, Ermenonville and Compiègne, all of which were once favourite hunting-grounds of the French Kings. The hunt depicted in the illustrations took place in the forest of Ermenonville. Owing to the exigencies of French hunting, the packings of relays and so forth, more men are needed in the field than in an English hunt. Thus, the Prince's pack requires the services of a *piqueux* (hunter), two *valets-de-chiens à cheval* (mounted whips) and two *valets-de-chiens à pied*. The men on foot look after the hound relays, which are placed at various parts of the forest where the deer is expected to pass. The Hunt uniform is Hussar blue, with collar, cuffs and waistcoat of garnet colour. As is often the custom of French hunting-men, the breeches are dark blue, a hue which is perhaps more serviceable but not so smart-looking as the white or light colour of British hunting-folk. Among those who have the privilege of wearing the button of the Rallye-Chambly are the Marquis de Beaumont, Prince de la Moskowa, Comte de Songeons, Comte de Lorencez, the Duc d'Elchingen, Prince Léon Radziwill, Comte de Mailly-Chalons, Comte André de Ganay, Comte Le Marois, Prince Eugène Murat, Marquis d'Albuféra-Suchet, MM. Cailhaut and H. and E. Potron.

The stag, a first-rate ten-pointer, has, after a good chase, gone to water, or, as we say in England, "taken soil." Driven from thence, he stands at last at bay in a rocky glade of the forest.



AT BAY.

where the end comes. The French term for what we call "the bay" is *l'hallali*. After the *piqueux* has performed his task and slain the stag, the *curée* takes place and the hounds are rewarded. From the *hallali* to the end of the *curée* is a long business, with much horn-blowing, the ceremonies often

occupying half-an-hour. With heated horses and themselves getting chilled and stiff, English sportsmen are not great admirers of this particular portion of the chase; but the French are very enthusiastic over it, and will not willingly relinquish any portion of these prolonged rites.

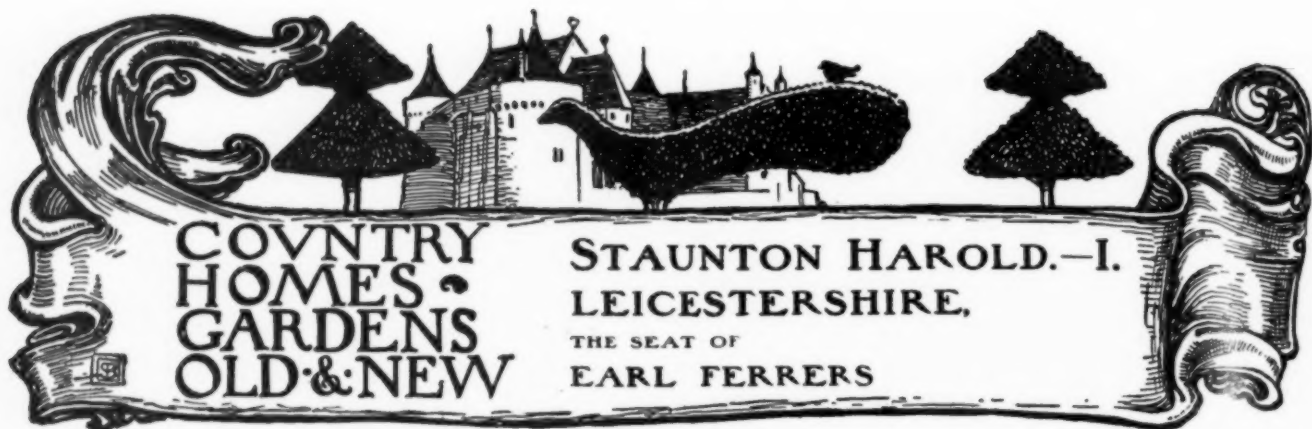
H. A. BRYDEN.

PONY BLOOD.



ON A WELSH HILLSIDE.

Our illustration shows better than words could how bone and stamina are produced in the mountain pony now being so largely used for breeding purposes. In the wintry weather these animals are seen fending for themselves. They have often to scrape away the snow with their feet before they can get anything to eat. Their life is practically the same as that of a wild animal, and their exercise is that which comes from searching for food or from an explosion of high spirits. How they can gallop, how they can run, how at a pinch they can pull and what weights they can carry are facts well known to everybody who has had the pleasure of owning a Welsh pony. Hence Mr. Edwards' picture might very well be termed "bone and stamina in the making."



AT Staunton Harold, where the Shirleys have been seated since the early fifteenth century, their pedigree unrolls itself to its full extent, blazoned with the arms and bright with the monuments to the buried race, for more than thirty feet. And it is not merely a roll of names. The characters, in the main, as they emerge for a little into the partial light, have often, besides their merely fighting quality, a loyalty to the Crown, a cultivation and taste for learning above and beyond the standard of their contemporaries. The long pedigree owes none of its length and colour to heraldic fictions and embellishments, for the Shirleys are

one of the few families whose descent from the time of the Conqueror is clearly established beyond dispute, as is recorded in the "Stemmata Shirleiana," one of the earliest family histories written in the spirit of critical enquiry. It begins with a certain Saswalo, a sub-tenant of the house of Ferrers. Dugdale does not go too far in his conclusion that Saswalo "was an eminent person, forasmuch as he did not only possess this great lordship (of Ettington), but also Tipton in Northamptonshire, part of Witenai in Lincolnshire, and Hatun, Hoga, and Etewell in Derbyshire." Nothing was known of Saswalo but his name, which, Dugdale very cautiously surmised, "argues him to have been of the old English stock, as some think." But the name would seem to argue the other way, for, as Mr. Barron has pointed out, it and its variants Sawald and Sewell do not find a place in England before the Conquest, while they are at home on the other side of the Channel. But though the line can be pushed no further back than this Saswalo, who held land in six lordships in the Midlands, it now stretches onward uninterruptedly. Saswalo's descendants in the male line have held Ettington from his day to the present. Henry, the elder son of Saswalo, gives, by consent of Robert Earl Ferrers, the church of Eaten-den to the monks of Kenilworth, "for the good estate of the said Earl, his wife, and sons, as also for the remission of his own sins, and the souls' healths of his ancestors, successors, parents and friends," and is succeeded by another Henry, son of his brother Fulcher.

The settlement between the second Henry and his brother Sewallis, by which he sells his birthright to his younger brother, is extant. Fulcher had been granted land in Shirley in Derbyshire, and Sewallis is the first of the line to be called de Seyrle or Shirley. Sewallis was succeeded by his son Henry, who was living in the reign of John, and he again was followed by a Sewallis. Sewallis' son and heir, Sir James Shirley, was obliged to appeal to the King for the restoration of his manor of Ettington, which his son Ralph had laid hands upon, and even pulled down his father's *chateau*, sold his goods, and lifted his cattle "while his father was afar off." The death of James settled the dispute, and Ralph continued



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THE FIRST EARL'S GARDEN GATEWAY.

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COUNTRY LIFE.

THE SOUTH-EAST FRONT.

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THE LION FRONT.

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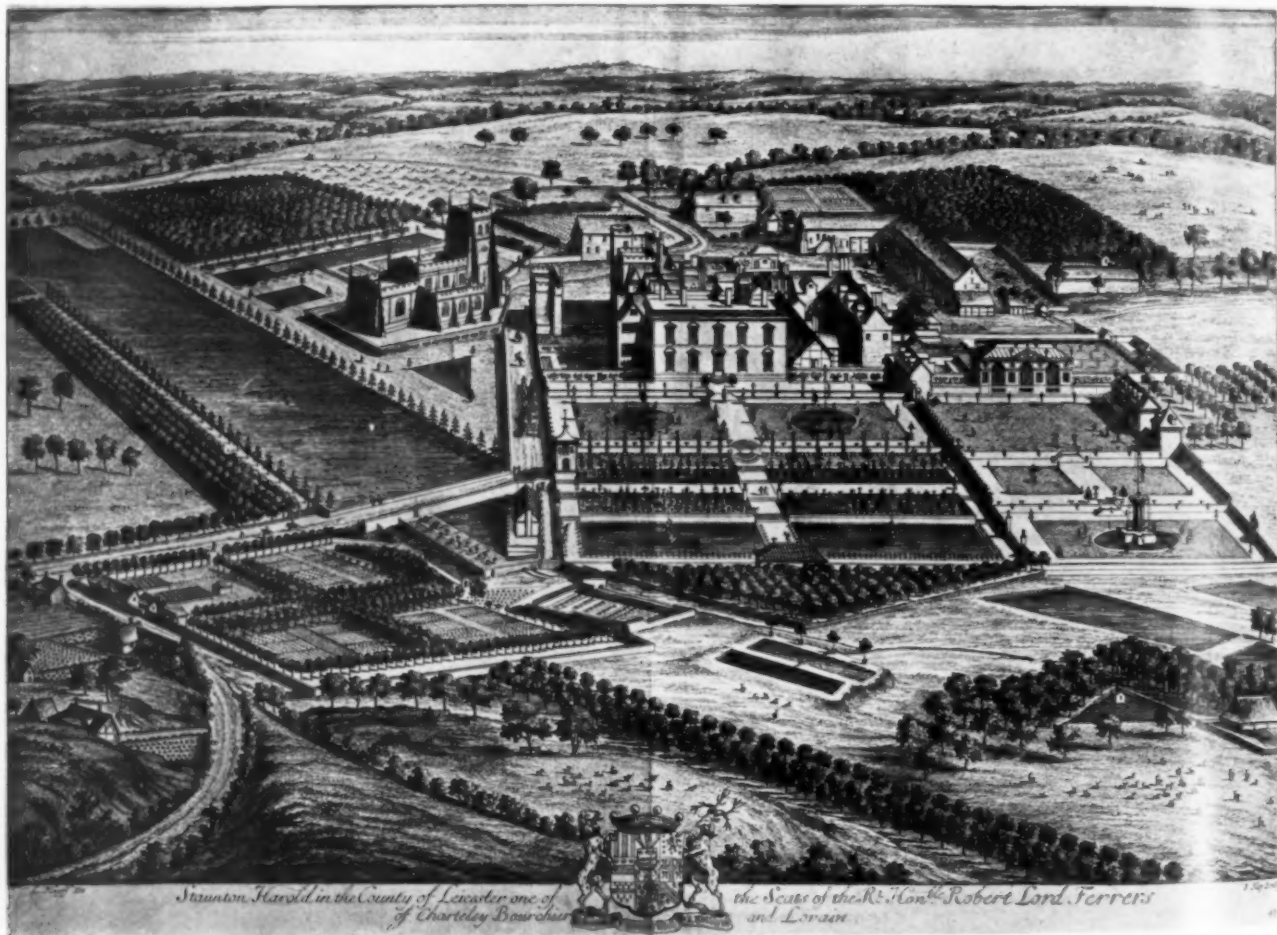
in possession, lawfully this time. Ralph was knighted and became a person of great consideration in the county of Warwick, and was the first knight of the shire returned to the Parliament which met in 1294. A descendant, Sir Thomas Shirley, tells us that he was knighted at the battle of Falkirk, "where he did wonders, to the admiration and astonishment of the beholders," and that he served in the Welsh expedition against Llewellyn, and fought with courage at the battle of Boroughbridge. On Sir Ralph's death in the last year of Edward II., his son and heir, Thomas, became the "great father of the Shirleys," famous in his time (according to the historian, his namesake) for his valour and for many services rendered to the Kings of England against the French. But there is no authoritative evidence that he did fight at Crecy and Poitiers. He seems to have fought at home, for there is a pardon under the Great Seal to him for causing the

death of John Waryne of Loxley in 1360. Dugdale has not so much to say for him as Sir Thomas—indeed, he finds "nothing memorable" but his death. His marriage with the heiress of the great baronial house of Basset of Drayton, other branches of which held the baronies of Waldon, Sapcote, Hedendon, Wycombe and Colinton, is, however, worth recording. His son, Sir Hugh, followed the fortunes of the Red Rose. Henry, as Duke of Lancaster, had made him Constable of Donington Castle, and, as King, made him Grand Falconer within the Kingdom of Ireland, the duties of the office being to provide the various kinds of hawks used in the sport of falconry. Through his marriage with Beatrice de Braose, ultimate heiress of her brother Sir John and descended from the powerful Lords of Bramber, he added to himself an inheritance in Sussex. He met his death on the field of Tewkesbury, and, according to some accounts, as one of the four knights who, clothed in Royal armour, opposed Douglas—

Another King—they grow like hydra's heads,

—and fell before him until he in his turn met his fate.

His son Ralph, a boy at the time of his father's death, was no doubt taken into Royal protection. He was knighted before he reached the age of twenty-one, and held the office of Steward of the Duchy of Lancaster. He followed Henry V. to France, and was present with his retinue of six esquires and eighteen archers at the siege of Harfleur. He seems to have lived principally at his manor at Radcliffe-on-Sore in Nottinghamshire; but with his son Ralph began the Shirleys' long connection with Staunton Harold. The Stauntons had long



Staunton Harold in the County of Leicester one of the Seats of the Rt. Hon. the Robert Lord Ferrers and Lord.

KIP'S VIEW OF STAUNTON HAROLD.

been in possession here, and Ralph Shirley, marrying in 1423 the heiress of the Stauntons, removed his seat there. John, the son of this marriage, was much "affected" to Staunton Harold, so that in all his charters, records and evidences he styled himself of Staunton Harold. Ralph, son and heir of John, continued the traditions of Royal service in following Henry VII.'s standard when the King set his foot upon Lambert Simnel's insurrection, and was one of the fifty-two knights

old hanging of red sey, but the room has for its only *meubles* a cupboard, trestle-table and andirons. There seemed to have been little to fill the remaining rooms but beds, carpets and worn wall hangings; and these must have been cold and comfortable, in spite of one "little chafer of laten like a lyon" which figures in the wardrobe chamber.

His son Francis seems to have been remarkable for the virtue of hospitality, so much insisted upon in Elizabethan



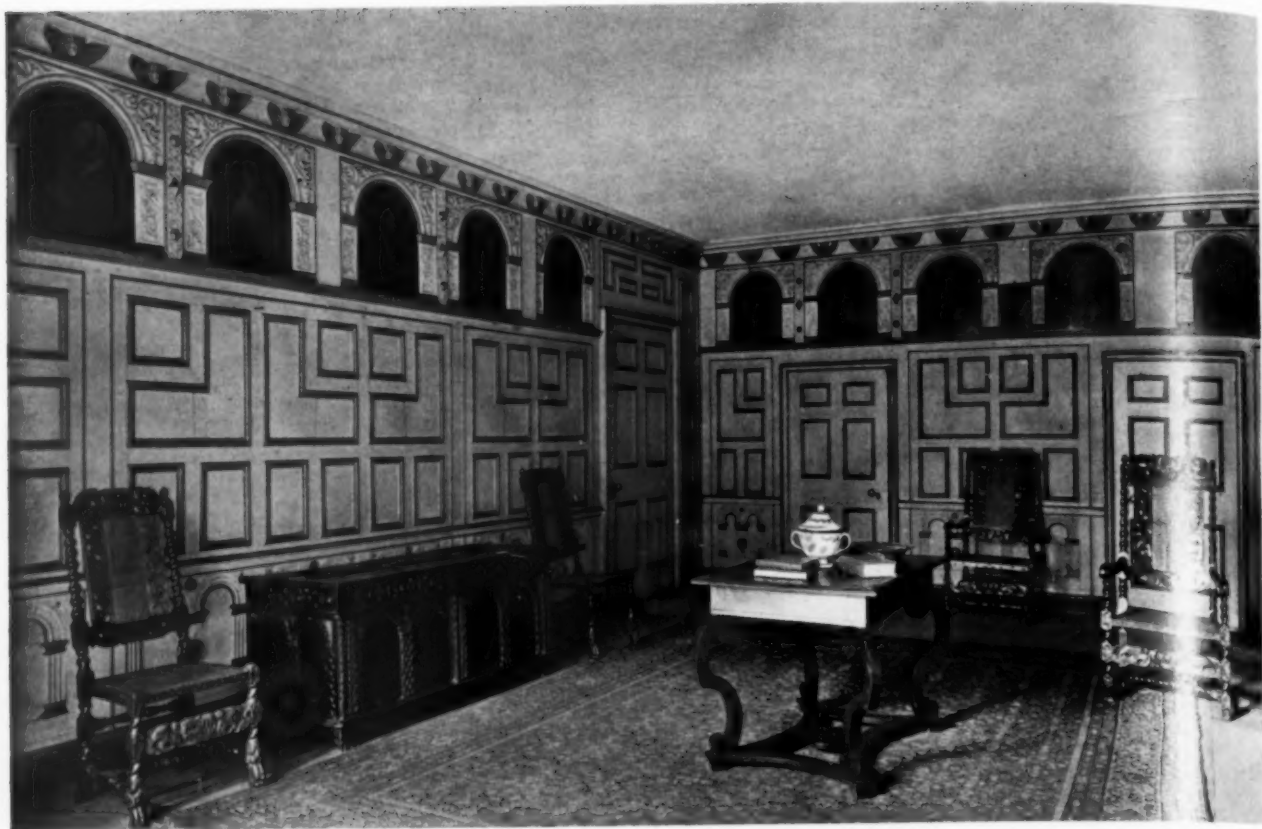
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THE STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

dubbed on the field of Stoke. An inventory of the goods at Staunton Harold, taken after his death in 1517, gives a picture of the house of a gentleman of the early sixteenth century living in something of state, nothing of comfort. The great hall is hung with a piece of imagery of "beyond-sea work." Besides the four short tables are four forms fastened to the ground, a cupboard and a Flemish carpet. The great parlour shows traces of tattered magnificence with its hangings of stained cloth of "beyond-sea work," old and torn, and its

literature, for he is described on his monument as the "very paitronne of hospitalite." Francis' eldest son John, who was born in 1535, "drew admiration from all that ever saw him, who all praised him for the sweet candour of his life and rare acuteness of his wit" (according to his grandson, Sir Thomas, whose record becomes more interesting as it nears living tradition). Fifteen years after his death a monument was raised to his memory by his son in Breedon Church, near Staunton, where so many of the Shirleys lie buried.



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STAUNTON HAROLD: THE JUSTICE ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE LIBRARY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

This son, Sir George, also has an excellent character for learning given him by Sir Thomas, and this is borne out by his collection of books at Staunton Harold. The purchase of books, however, does not bulk largely in the interesting account book of "Allmaner Recetts and payments belonging to the right worshipfull George Shirley of Astwell," carefully kept by some trusted servant; but we find him buying a book on Fortification and Aesop's "Fables." His various outgoings and incomings are carefully entered under their respective heads, and we can form some idea of the unending business, the intricate domestic economy of the country gentleman, farming, building, repairing, hawking and hunting, buying armour from Flanders, and brightening Staunton with rich furniture and tapestry. The accounts from 1592-95 show how all this elaborate house-furnishing was done on the spot. The yarn and wool was spun, probably in the house, and then dyed; lastly the "imbrotherer" and arras worker were called in, lodged for a year or so, and paid for their work, in providing a sufficiency of cupboard cloths, cushions, hangings, carpets, counterpoynts, chair and stool



A LATE XVII. CENTURY FIREPLACE.

coverings for the great house. John Turner, the "imbrotherer," and Edmund Tylor of Staunton, the arras worker, appear to divide the work between them during these years, after which Staunton was doubtless "completely and exactly furnished"—a great contrast to its neglected condition in 1517.

According to Macaulay, not one country gentleman in a hundred, of a later date, travelled once in seven years beyond the nearest market town; but the truth is that the richer country squires were often upon the road, and few that lived within a few days' journey of London failed to visit it—probably in the spring or summer when the roads were in good condition for horsemen and coaches. Sir George goes to London, where there are disbursements for "play," rides to "the Bathe," moves from one county seat to another, so that Staunton, Ragdale and Astwell see something of him. He was made a baronet in the famous first batch of May, 1611, and was buried with his fathers in 1622. Like many another of his contemporaries, he made sure of his monument in his lifetime, and raised the fine two-storeyed alabaster memorial of himself in Breedon Church. At the base is a skeleton extended on a mat;



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A HOB GRATE.

"C.L."

above are the kneeling figures of Sir George and his lady, his two sons and a daughter, and beside them two infants in cradles.

He was succeeded by his eldest son Henry, who in early life was sent "for the bettering of his understanding and the gaining of languages" to travel abroad. On his return he became a friend of that other young Henry, the promising Prince of Wales, whose death was such a blow to him that "he retired himself into the country to live a solitarie life, determining not to think of Courtly Pompe or glorie. At the length, by the oportunitye and persuasion of his honourable



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IN THE SERVANTS' HALL.

"C.L."



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IN BREEDON CHURCH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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EAST SIDE OF SHIRLEY PEW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

father, he was content for the preservation of his name to take a wife." The lady in question was Lady Dorothy Devereux, daughter of Queen Elizabeth's favourite, Lord Essex, and co-heiress with her sister of their brother, the Parliamentary General. It is not without reason that Sir Thomas becomes enthusiastic upon one "Marke of Eminence" which shines most resplendently on this house," their matches with the ancient and most illustrious Houses of England, so that "in twenty generations they have joined in marriage with none but noble families." Sir Henry seems to have shared his brother the antiquary Sir Thomas' heraldic tastes to judge by the decorations of Ragdale Old Hall, which he rebuilt. In the "Stemmata" are printed some curious papers relating to his quarrel with the Earl of Huntingdon, a near neighbour in Leicestershire, about the right of hawking, which led to his imprisonment for "slandering" the said Earl. It was recorded that he had said "He cared never for a Lord in England, except the Lord of Hosts, and that it was a fine thing for any Lord to deny him hawking on his ground, and that he was glad my Lord had no more ground to hawk in; that he had a spirit as well as my Lord, and that my Lord should hear from him within three weeks, but no man would deny a gentleman, for I am a gentleman"—words in which we seem to see the choleric confusion of a Sir Anthony Absolute. He withdrew his imputation on Lord Huntingdon, and was enlarged.

Like his father, he chose Breedon for his place of burial, giving instructions in his will that he should be buried "without any manner of pomp or funeral obsequies to be performed, but with as great privacy and silence as is possible." J.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

SUSSEX SEA-TROUT.

At least three sea-trout have been killed with the rod on the Sussex Arun this season. One hears very little of these fine *Salmonidae* on our Southern coast-line nowadays, but there can be little doubt that years ago they were abundant enough. The three fish already accounted for scaled 6lb. 10oz., 6lb. 5oz. and 3lb., weights, respectively, which would be regarded as extremely satisfactory upon the best of our British rivers. All three were taken with spoon-bait. Sea-trout are still known to ascend the Ouse and Rother in Sussex, but the few captures made are seldom, if ever, heard of by the outer world. The Christchurch Avon, a little further West along the coast, is still well known as a salmon river, and some very heavy fish are taken there, especially in the Ringwood waters. But for a good many years no single specimen of *Salmo salar* has been heard of in the Arun. The last known salmon taken in this river was, I believe, captured in a net some two

decades since near Pulborough. The state of affairs in the South of England is not now, I fear, very conducive to the run of Salmonidae in the rivers of Sussex and Hampshire. The pollution of the Channel waters by the outfall of crude sewage from all our big seaside towns increases every year, and until this horrible system is put an end to, as it ought to have been long since, one cannot expect such fishes as

THE HAUNTS OF SEA-TROUT.

It is, I fear, far too much to hope that sea-trout will ever again be seen in their former plenty in our Southern rivers. "Peal," as they are known in Cornwall and Devon, are still fairly abundant in our Western streams; but even there, as most anglers know to their cost, the run of these fish is declining. To enjoy sea-trout



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BREEDON CHURCH: SIR GEORGE SHIRLEY'S MONUMENT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

salmon and sea-trout to run the gauntlet of these waters and ascend rivers in any plenty. The wonder is even that the Christchurch Avon is still found to attract a certain number of salmon every year, considering the contamination of the neighbouring salt water by such big centres of population as Bournemouth, Portsmouth, Gosport, Ryde and Weymouth, not to mention smaller towns.

fishing in perfection, the further one can get from the haunts of mankind and the wilder and more remote the country the better. In such waters as are to be found on the wild and beautiful coastline of Connemara, for example, good sea-trout-fishing is still to be obtained, though even there, from various reasons, the size and the run of fish are not quite what they used to be. I have the

tenderest recollections of some of these waters, especially on that magnificent stretch of coast scenery between Galway and Costello Bay. Mayo, one of the most magnificent of all British counties, yields another fascinating stretch of littoral peculiarly favourable to the run of sea-trout. The lovely and remote streams found among the Hebrides and along the Western Coast of Scotland still yield water where, amid some of the most romantic scenery in Britain, good captures of the sporting *Salmo trutta* may yet be looked for. Further afield, the rivers of Norway, Iceland and Shetland may be named as peculiarly favourable to the devotee of sea-trout-fishing. The habits of these Salmonidæ seem to be far less well known even than those of the salmon; their migrations are singularly various and conflicting, and upon the East and West Coasts of Scotland these variations are especially well marked. Unlike the salmon, sea-trout feed freely in fresh water, and may be found stuffed with nourishing food of various kinds, of which worms constitute a considerable share, especially after heavy spates. The habits of sea-trout, in fact, are well deserving of much more serious study than they have yet received. It may be hoped that during the next few years closer research may

bird is more looked for or more welcome than the little chiff-chaff, one of the feeblest-looking yet the most punctual and most cheerful of all our feathered visitants. Its monotonous yet inspiring refrain is surely the truest herald of summer that we can look for; and not until I heard the voice of my little friend on the Thursday before Good Friday was I absolutely convinced that spring was indeed here. The chiff-chaff's familiar note is, in truth, each spring listened and longed for by thousands of people from one end of England to the other.

H. A. BRYDEN.

IN THE GARDEN.

GLADIOLI FOR SPRING PLANTING.

DURING the late summer and autumn months, from mid-July until well into October, there is usually a heavy demand for bold, brilliant coloured flowers for cutting, and few plants will give such a wealth of material for so comparatively small an outlay of time and trouble as the large-flowered, modern Gladioli. Time was when these flowers found a home in but few



E. J. Wallis.

MIXED BORDERS IN A SURREY GARDEN.

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enlighten the multitude of admirers of these beautiful sporting fish upon many points of which at present we remain in almost complete ignorance.

SPRING MIGRANTS.

In spite of the early promise of spring, the migrants seem, thus far, to be in no great hurry to come to us. A few wheatears appeared here and there before Easter, and considerable flocks of pied wagtails have been noticed. I heard and saw a chiff-chaff on March 20th, which is not an early date for this small but hardy wanderer. These birds are occasionally noted in the first week of March, the earliest date of which I have a note being the second of that month. The wanderings of this tiny and delicate-looking warbler are as marvellous as those of any of the birds that come to us in spring. They range in summer as far as the Arctic Circle and a little beyond; while in winter they may be seen in Abyssinia, Palestine, Arabia, Asia Minor and Persia. The chiff-chaff found in the Canaries is a still more diminutive race than this, and is known to naturalists as *Phylloscopus fortunatus*—manifestly from the fact that it is a resident inhabitant of the Fortunate Islands. After our long and darksome winter no spring

gardens in the country, a fact that was largely due to the paucity of really good colours among them, and to an erroneous but widespread belief that they were tender plants and very difficult to grow really well. Hybridists, with their usual acumen, have during the last two decades given us a wonderful wealth of new colours, principally by crossing the different species or types, and, in addition, have imported to the plants increased vigour and to the flowers greater size and graceful poise, so that the modern Gladioli are flowers that should be grown on a bountiful scale in all good gardens, and especially those where autumn flowers are appreciated.

Of the stately bearing of these Gladioli in bed or border it is not necessary to comment at length. Flower spikes three feet or even more in height, clothed for at least a third of their length with large, fully opened and gloriously brilliant blossoms, the middle tier carrying a wealth of partly-opened flowers, and higher up neatly folded buds in their pale green sheaths, need only to be once seen to be fully appreciated, and it is difficult to think of a position in either large bed or mixed border where they would be out of place. Grouped in colonies of nine or more, according to the size of the border, they are ideal for growing with herbaceous flowers.

and can be planted in close proximity to some that flower early in the summer and so fill the hiatus that would otherwise occur. One of the prettiest combinations of Gladioli and herbaceous plants I have ever seen was a large bed sparsely planted with the white Phlox, Mrs. E. H. Jenkins, and the scarlet *Gladiolus brenchleyensis* freely interspersed among them. Both flowered in August, and the combination of pure white and scarlet was particularly good.

Although these Gladioli are such excellent and useful plants for creating brilliant effects in the outdoor garden, I think they are even more useful for cutting, a point in their favour that was briefly referred to at the outset. The reason is this. The flowers on a spike, as already stated, do not all open at one time, the lower ones unfolding first, to be followed later, and in stages, by the buds on the upper portion of the stem. This development of blossoms goes on equally well when the spikes are cut and placed in water as it does if they are allowed to remain on the plant, consequently flower-spikes which are cut in their early stages of development will last in good condition in water for ten days or a fortnight, removal of the lower flowers as they fade and the replenishing of water every other day being all the attention that is necessary.

Now that the planting season is here, it may be useful to give a few hints on the cultivation of these flowers, which play as important a part in the autumn garden as the stately Darwin Tulips do in that of spring. Fortunately they are not very difficult to manage, and providing good corms, as the bulb-like roots are technically called, are procured, they can be accommodated in almost any garden in the United Kingdom. There are, however, a few essential points that must be remembered. These plants must have an open position, *i.e.*, one not heavily shaded by trees or buildings; well-drained, moderately rich soil; and the corms must at planting-time be kept from actual contact with fresh or green manure. With a modicum of ingenuity these essentials can be provided in almost any garden. Providing the soil has been deeply dug, and manured deep down with thoroughly rotted manure in fairly bounteous proportion, it should be in good condition for

planting, an additional forking over of the top ten inches and mixing well with it some steamed bone-meal—a good handful to each square yard—rendering it even more agreeable to the plants. The actual depth to plant will vary somewhat with the character of the soil. For instance, if it is heavy clay, three inches of covering soil will be sufficient, while in that of a very porous nature nearly twice that depth would be necessary, ranging it between these two according to the variation of the soil. At the risk of repetition it is necessary to emphasise the fact that perfect drainage is essential, and when planting Gladioli in clay soil it is advisable to put an inch of coarse sand under the corms and surround them with the same material, while for the choicer varieties it would be quite worth while to fill in the hole with some good potting soil.

Varieties are now so numerous that it is almost invidious to name any. The majority of those offered by firms of repute can be relied upon to do well, and particulars of these and other large-flowered sorts can be obtained from any good catalogue of bulbs for spring planting.

F. W. H.

ANNUAL FLOWERS IN MIXED BORDERS.

THE value of annual flowers in mixed borders can scarcely be over-estimated. Without them it would be well-nigh impossible to fill the gaps caused by the passing to rest of such spring flowers as Leopard's Bane, Daffodils and Tulips. There are two ways of using these annuals in the mixed border. One is to sow seeds of such kinds as *Nemesias*, Stocks, Asters and *Antirrhinums* in frames and subsequently plant the sturdy seedlings where they are to flower, and the other to sow the seeds of the more hardy kinds during April wherever they are needed to grow and blossom. Thus at the present time seeds of *Clarkias*, *Godetias*, *Leptosiphon*, Pot Marigolds, Cornflowers, Larkspurs, *Nigella*, Night-scented Stock, Annual Chrysanthemum, Candytuft, the fragrant *Mignonette* and, a few weeks later, the dwarf *Nasturtiums* may well be sown between the bulbs named, or, indeed, between almost any early-flowering plants that find a more or less permanent home in the mixed border. In the portion of border shown on the right of the illustration on the opposite page the charming *Nemesias* and so-called Asters, or, more correctly *Callistephuses*, have been successfully used, and add charm and colour where otherwise annoying blank spaces would have existed.

H.

ICE-YACHTING.

ONLY a few years ago the idea of a holiday abroad for winter sports was almost unthought of; certainly a goodly number of people travelled yearly to the Riviera and some of the Italian coast

towns to escape the vagaries of our early spring. Still, it was in search of warmth and sun, and not of ice and snow, that they roamed abroad. Now all this is changed, and although many are still true to their first love, and go to



READY TO START.

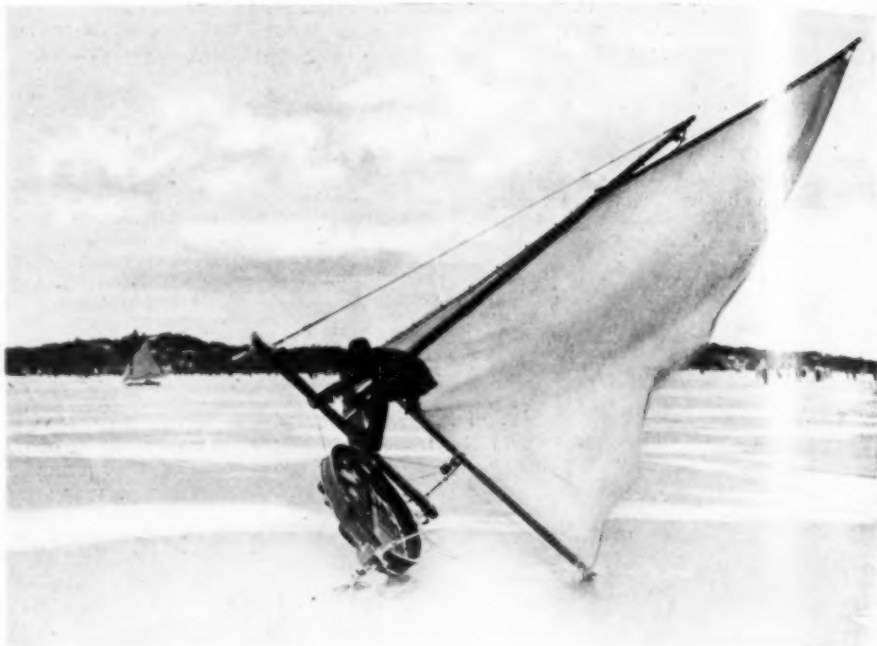
the Riviera or Egypt, yet a yearly increasing number flock to Switzerland and Norway for winter sports. At first the rigour of a winter climate was doubtless considered too great for any but the young and active; it might be safe and exciting enough for a man in the pink of condition and training, but for one who had led a more or less sedentary existence, and was also possibly somewhat settling down in age and figure, to go to Switzerland in the winter for skating, to be hurled down hill upon a toboggan, to come halfway down a mountain on ski in as many minutes as it took hours to ascend—in fact, to generally "fool about" in the snow, was looked on as madness, if not death. However, it has long since been discovered that in these high-altitude resorts and in these games on ice and snow lie the secret of eternal youth, of happiness and of health. So now the almost universal quest is the favoured land where the snow lies longest and the temperature remains steadily below freezing-point.

Having spent a part of the winter camping in Morocco, we returned to England too early, and, seeking winter sports somewhat off the beaten track, by a lucky chance went to Sweden, where we found not only ski-running, skating and tobogganing were to be obtained, but what will be to many the best of all, ice-yachting and skate-sailing. For excitement and exhilaration it is doubtful if there is anything to beat these sports, and for those who love pace I feel confident that there is nothing to touch them, for the speed is the rate of the wind. The chief centre in Sweden for ice-yachting, as well as for skate-sailing, is on the large fiord called Stora Värtan, just outside Stockholm, an immense sheet of water stretching for miles, dotted with numerous birch and pine clad islands. A more perfect cruising ground than this there could scarcely be. Usually there is ample wind to render sailing delightful, and often enough to make it of all sports the most exciting. The Ice Yacht Club House is at Djursholm, on this fiord, and here lie, as a rule, some fifty boats or more, Sunday being the day of days for the sport. Then everywhere are sails, yachts and skaters flying in and out of the islands. From Stockholm it is an easy journey, by electric train, of barely half-an-hour, and the station lies within a stone's throw of the club headquarters, the houseboat, which stands some four hundred yards from the shore, frozen in the ice.

Ice-yachting, unlike boat-sailing, is quickly and readily learnt; certainly it calls for skill and much judgment when it comes to racing, but with any knowledge of sailing, or even without, cruising can be enjoyed. There is little need to describe an ice-yacht, as this can more readily be seen from the photographs, in which also the two types of rig are clearly shown. The boats carry from two to three people, and cost, complete, from 300kr. to 400kr. (a kroner being equivalent to 1s. 1½d.). Unfortunately, the boats available for hiring are but few, as they are all the property of private owners. Occasionally, however, a boat can be



CAPSIZED.



AN ANXIOUS MOMENT.



A STEADY BREEZE.



TYPICAL RIGS.

bought second-hand, but these opportunities come seldom. Therefore, anybody intending to go to Sweden for yachting should write some little time in advance to Per Langborg, 5, Birger Jarlsgratan 5, Stockholm, who usually knows of any boats for hire, or sale, second-hand. How much notice is required to build I do not know, but it would be wise, I think, to allow fully two months.

Skate-sailing is a pastime that requires no outlay to speak of; the sail costs from 15kr. to 30kr., so this is not a big outlay. Also there is no need to make preparations in advance, for sails can be obtained at many shops in Stockholm. Here again there is little need to describe the sail, for the illustrations more clearly explain it, and, as can be seen, skate-sailing and ice-yachting are not for men only; women also can enjoy them. Skate-sailing is perhaps even more exciting, it certainly gives more exercise, than ice-yachting, and is very quickly learnt by a reasonably good skater. It would be wearisome to describe the delights of a day's sailing in a good breeze; let it suffice that it is of all exhilarating sports the most exhilarating. Besides Djurs-holm there is also Satsjö-baden, and this is perhaps even better than the Stora Värtan fiord for skate-sailing, and is equally easy of access from Stockholm.

I have purposely refrained from attempting the task of instruction in the art of sailing, for two very good reasons, the chief one being that I am a novice myself, the other because I know that half-an-hour's practical instruction is of more value than a volume written on the subject, and this, as I have proved, is always so cheerfully and readily given by a brother-sportsman, and the Swede is certainly the kindest that I have met. Travelling in Sweden is most comfortable, the railway carriages are excellent, dining and restaurant cars are

attached to nearly all the trains, the hotels are cheap and very comfortable, and everywhere English people are welcomed with extraordinary kindness.

E. HARVEY JARVIS.

FISHING ON THE BROADS.

ALL anglers who are looking forward to the summer holiday season and to sport with rod and line on the Norfolk Broads may not be aware that free fishing on the rivers Yare, Bure and Waveney and their adjoining Broads is a thing of the past. Since its foundation in 1857 the Yare and Bure Preservation Society has done excellent work in obtaining legal authority to put a stop to netting for pike, roach and bream, and in suppressing fish-poaching; but with the establishment of the Norfolk Fishery Board the old society ceased to exist and new fishery regulations came in force. In future every angler in Broadland will have to provide himself with a licence to fish. In the past there have been frequent complaints that the Preservation Society has been a locally-supported charitable institution. Visitors, while benefiting

greatly by its activities, have shown little disposition to contribute financially to the carrying on of its work. Indeed, it would not be unjust to accuse them of discreditable meanness, for when, a week or two ago, two collecting-boxes were sent in from a popular anglers' resort on the Yare, one box was found to contain twopence-halfpenny and the other a solitary halfpenny! These munificent sums represented the visitors' donations to the funds of the society during the previous twelve months! Under the new Fisheries Order, the Board has power to compel every angler who fishes on the Broads and Broadland rivers to pay for his sport, but the licences are granted at very reasonable rates. For one day's fishing a charge of threepence is made;



SKATE-SAILING.

for seven days, sixpence; and for any longer period up to the end of the year, one shilling. Arrangements are being made for the sale of licences at the post offices of all the towns and villages along the river banks, but if any angler has difficulty in getting one he should apply to the secretary of the Fishery Board, Mr. A. J. Rudd, 54, London Street, Norwich, at the same time sending the fee for the time during which he wishes to fish. This year there will be a close time for all fish from April 15th until June 15th. Next year the close time will begin on March 15th.

IN THE BLACKMORE VALE.

THE end of this week will see the termination of hunting in a good many countries, among others the famous Blackmore Vale, of which Whyte Melville wrote in such glowing terms. A country for the most part of rolling hills and rich grass vales, the value of the pasture makes such a country unsuitable to ride over late into the spring, after the grass has been bush-harrowed and everything put tidy for the season; and though the farmer there has as good a reputation as a sportsman as is to be found in England, yet even he might be inclined to call "enough" were his beautiful pastures ridden over too late in a season like the present. My own knowledge of the country is confined to a day in the Thursday district, which is not by any means a favourite part—though from what I saw of it I should say it was a very fine stronghold for foxes, and likely to produce the right wild kind which seems in many places to become more scarce as years go on. A rough country of mixed woodland, gorse and hills, and with—at this time at least—



GOING OUT INTO THE MUD.

plenty of clay and mud, it is anything but the kind of country likely to be affected by those who go out to show themselves



THE MASTER.



AT THE LAST FENCE BUT ONE.

to one another and, as the cabman said of the London hunting-man at the station, to "look like a bloomin' oleograph."

More typical of the country at its best is the scene of their Point-to-Point Races, which took place on Saturday last near Templecombe. The course, though criticised by some who rode in the events, was an interesting one from the point of view of the onlooker unaccustomed to seeing racing over a banking course, and though, I suppose, like eels and skinning, one gets used to these things, some of the banks, notably that out of the road and second last in the course, gave one "furiously to think" when one saw half-a-dozen, more or less, beat horses coming rolling along after galloping over some three miles of deep country and jumping who knows how many obstacles. All, however, surmounted it successfully, though they did not all seem to give their jockeys just that "feel" so impossible to describe.

It is said of the gallant Irish sportsmen who climb up and surmount the most forbidding banks, guarded by big ditches on either side, that most of them will go anywhere rather than jump a flying fence. In like manner a few old Blackmore Vale banks, placed in a country of flying fences, would probably make the best performers there crane their necks and take a pull till they got used to them. One thing is certain, that to go with any degree of brilliance in that country must require an accomplished hunter, whose education has been progressive and thorough. Judging by the stamp one sees there, those who can keep a very fine type of horse, the short-backed, well-coupled horse seeming to find favour, and no doubt balance—a quality so often under-estimated—is even more necessary in this "on and

off" style of jumping than when fences can be cleared in one jump.

BABY ANIMALS.

"THERE seem to be a lot of different ways of bringing up a baby." That was the comment of a good lady, herself not without experience in that most essential art, after reading Mr. Pycraft's really rather wonderful book, "The Infancy of Animals" (Hutchinson). Certainly those who have not given previous attention to this subject, which



A BANK IN THE BLACKMORE VALE.

is extraordinary in many ways, will be full of wonder, and though its author has steered clear of scientific terms which would perplex the uninitiated, the book is so informing that it is scarcely possible that the most deeply learned might not find in it something new to him, whether fact or inference. The infinite variety of the modes in which Nature has taught the creatures to continue their kind is amazing all up the scale of evolution. There was a time, indeed, when there were no babies—a statement which may read like paradox, but it is the fact that in the first and simplest conditions of life reproduction was effected by the splitting into two of a single individual, and each of the two halves was immediately a new and well-grown individual of the same species. That was in the beginning. But Mr. Pycraft's way in this book was not to work from the beginning upwards, but from the highest—that is to say, from the human babyhood—downwards. Nor does he carry the story to its primeval simplicities, as he finishes with an account of the babyhood of the insects.

The reader will not fail to find fascination in a very early chapter of the book which treats of the protective coloration in the form of long stripes of the young of many animals. The grass blades and lines of light on the sunny sides of branches form stripes of colour in the vegetation, and the light stripes on the darker coat assimilate into these. It is in infancy, before the strength to resist or the speed to escape are developed, that this power of concealment is most valuable, and accordingly we see it displayed, during infancy, in a wonderful number of species all down the series, and lost later in life when it has no longer the same value for the preservation of the kind. Then Mr. Pycraft, by his illustrations and his text, shows us how in some cases the stripes

are broken into spots, where the spotted garment is one that assimilates more nearly to the background where the young thing lives. Young birds of the species that nest on bare beaches of gravel may be given as an instance.

The illustrations deserve a special word of praise, not only for their own merit, but because they really do illustrate and make clear the text. In fact, full of interest as the book is, it would hardly attain the popularity which we think it is sure to command, were it not for the illustrations which make its wonders clear. One of the lines of enquiry and explanation to which the author devotes himself is the different degree of care required by the infant and bestowed by the parent throughout the evolution story. In a general way it is a true statement that the care becomes greater as the species is more highly developed, but it is a rule which has many modifications and exceptions. The range is as wide as may be, from the continuous attention that is claimed by the helpless infants in our nurseries to the absolute disregard of their offspring displayed by some creatures which deposit eggs to be hatched by the heat of the sun or of decaying vegetation. On the other hand, some lovely kinds show an amazing care, and what we may call, paradoxically, unconscious fore-knowledge of the wants of an infant that they will never live to see come from the egg. The varied modes of carrying the young are no less remarkable; and perhaps the frog family display the most curious instances. Mr. Pycraft also shows us the effects, and takes us with him in his analysis of the evolutionary steps of the birds of which the young are respectively nidicolous—that is to say, home-dwellers—or nidifugous—that is, quitting the home nest almost as soon as hatched. But it is impossible to indicate in a short notice more than a suggestion of the good things that are in this book. H. G. H.

ON THE GREEN.

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON AND BERNARD DARWIN.

IS THE AMATEUR INTERNATIONAL MATCH WORTH PLAYING?

EVER since the announcement made at the amateur championship meeting at Westward Ho! in 1912, that the match of amateur teams between England and Scotland was likely to be given up, and yet more after the definite decision of the authorities to abandon

it had been announced, there was a great deal of talk and a great deal of writing of letters and articles, of asking the opinion of leading golfers on the question, and so forth. On the whole the answers seem to bear out the view that it is a pity to give up the match. To be sure, if we were to balance the "ayes" and the "noes" in the answers that have been received and made public, then we should have to assign more emphasis than this to the affirmation that it is desirable to continue this annual encounter; but account has to be taken of the fact that if the question is put to a man who is at all zealous for the match, he is pretty certain, unless he be an intolerably lazy player with pen and ink, to sit down at once and write his answer, to that effect; whereas, if the question comes, with the rest of the matutinal mail, to a man who is quite indifferent about the match, he is not at all likely to take any other action in the matter

than that involved in chucking the letter into the waste-paper basket.

It appears to me, however, that both in the asking of the questions, and also in the mode of appraising the answers, rather a mistake is being made. It seems rather to be assumed as granted that the opinion that counts in this matter is the opinion of those who have taken part in this match for years

past, and in all likelihood would take part in it for years to come—if it shall be in existence. It is, of course, impossible to ignore their views. But what those in charge of the match, responsible for its continuance or its abolition, ought to realise, perhaps, rather more clearly than they do, is that it is not to the men of established position in the forefront of the battle that such a preliminary skirmish as this International match is of any importance. It is to the men who are just arriving, are just hoping to arrive, or about to arrive, that this is a matter of importance and interest. The men who are already there ought to realise this, and not look on it from their own point of view. To Smith major, who is captain of



MR. G. D. FORRESTER—CAPTAIN OF THE OXFORD TEAM.

the school eleven, it seems a matter of mighty little importance whether or no he gives Jones minor his colours for the second twenty-two; but that is by no means the view of Jones minor about the business. All depends on the point of view and

on the sense in which you understand the word "importance." To the big evolution scheme, or to the gods who look down from their gallery on things terrestrial, it may seem of equal importance who is Prime Minister, who wins the battle of Waterloo, who is a member of the second twenty-two, or who plays in the International match. The point to consider, as it seems to me, is whether this International match provides a reasonable golfing interest, whether selection to play in it is a reasonable object of golfing ambition, whether it affords a good practice-ground for rising golfing ability. I do not think we need to enquire whether the destinies of nations are affected by its results, or Scotland or England shaken to their social foundations. There is no need that they should be. The question to ask is whether it gives good fun and a good preliminary canter to those who have hopes of getting first prizes in the big race some day; and to that question the affirmative answer seems to me the only one possible.

For that reason I am all in favour of the continuance of this International match. In the course of this discussion, as of others, much nonsense has been talked. It has been said that the match is too heavy a "strain" on those who are about to bear the brunt of the amateur championship struggle. It is generally played on a Saturday. If a man in the health and vigour that ought to be his happy possession, if he is at all fit to go in for such a competition as the amateur championship tournament, is to have such a strain imposed on his nerve tissue by the International match on Saturday that he cannot recover from it sufficiently to be fresh again by the Monday, then all I have to say is that he must be regarding the importance of that match with an eye that has lost all sense of proper proportion. It is almost an hysterical point of view to take. I do not in the least blame the authorities (not that it would make them lie sleepless if I were to do so) for discontinuing the match. Such a deal was said about the lack of interest in it; some of the leaders—Scots chiefly—spoke of it with so much indifference, that their action was quite justified. It is their leaders that I am more disposed to blame for looking at the matter with their own eyes instead of with the eyes of those to whom it is an affair that signifies. But, besides much nonsense about the "strain," it appears to me that there has been some unwisdom in certain of the suggestions that have been made for the future play of the match. Very few have been in favour of the foursome mode of playing it, and certainly I do not think that the salvation of the match in the future lies that way. The foursome is very pleasant, very friendly, but it is not the stern man-to-man duel that we seem to want when nation meets nation. But I cannot think the suggestion is wise that the match should be played at any other date than that of the amateur championship. It is hard enough for the competitors to come together for that one great meeting in the year; it might be impossible for many of them to devote the time and money that a second meeting would cost them. Of course, it is true that the gathering for the match would not be nearly as large as that for the championship—only those actually selected would assemble—but I doubt whether really representative teams could be gathered at any other date than that of the championship. To be sure, it would give more of the less-known men their chance if this were to be so, but it would take away much of the present legitimate interest;

they might even deem that such an edition of the Hamlet play, with not only the Prince himself but several others of the leading characters left out, was hardly worth taking part in.

Increase the number of players on each side, if you like, so as to give more men a chance, but keep to the old date for the match—the Saturday before the tournament week—and let it be played, as aforetime, by singles. H. G. H.



MR. GERALD DU MAURIER.

LEADING CASES.

I HAVE just been studying a book which far too few golf clubs possess. That is "Compendium of the Decisions of the Rules of Golf Committee from 1909 to 1912," published by the University Press of St. Andrews. There is a capital index, so that one can discover quickly and easily whether or not there is a recent decision on any doubtful point. If this book was only to be found on golf club tables, disputants would often save themselves from getting hot and angry and the hard-working Court of Appeal at St. Andrews would be saved the trouble of answering a great many questions that never need have been asked, because they have been answered before. In a short preface the Rules Committee say that many of the cases submitted to them arise owing to competitions being held under conditions insufficiently stated, and they therefore proceed to specify the points that should be clearly provided before starting.

THE VALUE OF A SECOND CHANCE.

A curious and—as these "break" matches go—a rather interesting match has lately been made between four good players. A, who is very good indeed, is to play the best ball of B, C and D, who are a shade or two better than scratch, on the condition that A may, at his option, play any one shot over again at each hole. I am bound to admit that my instinct is to say that A will surely be beaten, but there are really no precedents to go upon. One thing is tolerably certain—that the coalition, if they do not play abominably badly, will produce a "par" score, and if they are playing well and dovetailing their long putts with discretion, they will produce something considerably better. As to the value of the replayed stroke, who shall venture an estimate? We all know that when, having missed a putt, we replace the ball and try again, that ball is immediately holed, but that is because we do not much mind whether it is holed or not. In this case A will mind, and there is the rub.

MR. G. D. FORRESTER.

Mr. Forrester is the captain of this year's Oxford side, and will be engaged in battling against Cambridge at Hoylake just at the moment when these remarks burst into print. To prophesy about the result of the match would under the circumstances be too rash an act. Whatever may happen, Mr. Forrester has had the satisfaction of seeing his team improve very much, for after a disastrous autumn they had a very successful Lent term, winning matches where before they had lost them. Mr. Forrester has himself improved a great deal, and is now a much better player than when he was beaten by Mr. Lloyd in last year's match. He has a free, loose, easy style, and can play on occasions very fine golf; indeed, we have probably not seen quite the best of him in the trial matches, for there is an element of uncertainty about his game. Mr. Forrester is also a good cricketer, and played once or twice for his University last year.

MR. GERALD DU MAURIER.

Mr. Gerald du Maurier, who has just revived with much success that famous play "Diplomacy," is one of the chief props of his side in those singularly cheerful and light-hearted matches which the Actors play from time to time against the Bar, the Press and other kindred golfing societies. He is not yet quite so good a golfer as he is an actor, but he is a good one nevertheless, with a handicap respectably low down in single figures. There was some little while ago a golf match in which a distinguished gentleman undertook to play in the suit of armour which he wore upon the stage. Should this form of game become popular Mr. du Maurier would have a great advantage, since on the stage he can charm us all without any adventitious aid and arrayed in his ordinary clothes. If, indeed, he were compelled to play in his attire as Captain Hock in "Peter Pan" and smoking two cigars at once, after the manner of that redoubtable buccaneer, his golf might be put to an adequately severe test. B. D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A FOURTEENTH CENTURY SPORTING ENCYCLOPEDIA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The article in COUNTRY LIFE of March 8th on Chillingham Castle reminds one that it is just six centuries ago that a predecessor in the title of the present owner wrote that curious—and in its day, standard—book on sport, that goes by the title of "Le Livre du Roy Modus et de la Roynie Racio." The Comtes de Tancarville were hereditary Chamberlains of Normandy, and the title passed by marriage to and fro between the protagonists of the Hundred Years' War. The author of the treatise on sport referred to had acquired the title through his wife. He and his son appear in the pages of Froissart, and were captured by the English at Caen and Poitiers respectively. The latter left two sons, who inherited the title in turn; and the daughter of the latter carried it in marriage to a Harcourt. By them it was forfeited, and granted at the beginning of the fifteenth century to a Grey, from whom the present Earl of Tankerville derives descent. All forms of sport are treated of by the Comte de Tancarville in his book, which was widely copied. Several of these copies are now in the National Library in Paris, and probably many copies exist in public and private libraries in England. There is a sixteenth century copy in the library at Bradbourne Hall, Sevenoaks. The stag, the wild boar, the fox, the otter, the heron, the pheasant, the mavis, the lark, and many another are treated of in turn; also falconry, archery, and the diseases of dogs and falcons. And then the instructions of Modus are varied by the ethics of Ratio, which make very curious reading, and many a hit is scored against the morality, clerical as well as civil, of the time. The Ten Commandments are linked up with the ten points of a stag's horns—which supported the Cross in the miraculous vision of St. Eustace—and with the ten fingers of a priest's hands, with which he supports the Host. And the ten commandments of Anti-Christ are linked up with the ten evil qualities of the wild boar. Elsewhere Ratio relates an allegory, wherein the fox and otter make a compact, since which they have been masters *des lanes et des forêts* for such a long time that there is no memory to the contrary. In this the Fox says to the Otter: "Il n'est rien qu'on ne face par compère et commère, nous sommes tous de la confrérie Saint Fausset." The meaning of St. Fausset's confederacy is, as far as I am concerned, yet to seek. The "Livre du Roy Modus et de la Roynie Racio" was published in Paris by Elzevir Blaise in 1839, but has, I believe, never been published in England.—F. LAMBARDE.

FLOODS AND TIMBER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Did you notice in the accounts of the destructive floods in America that the havoc was largely attributed to "the denudation of timber and neglect of trees"? May I suggest that this ought to be a warning to Great Britain? Are not many of our trees thoroughly neglected, choked by ivy and wild hop? The late Sir Joseph Hooker tried to stop it, but no one else seems to be alive to the danger. The matter is one that concerns not only the owners of the woodlands, but the general public, and I make no apology, therefore, for directing attention to it.—VIGILANT.

DISCIPLINE FOR THE CONGREGATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—This finger-stock is situated in the west end of St. Helens Parish Church, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and is some hundred years old. It is made of oak. When members of the congregation did not behave, they were taken to this stock and a finger placed in the allotted places. The lid is raised, and then the two first joints of the finger fit down a hole, and a third joint fits in the holes shown in the picture; the lid is then lowered, and it is then impossible to withdraw the fingers, but I expect they were released at collection-time. You will note the spaces for adults' fingers are at the ends opposite to the lock. When the church was restored some years ago, the old-fashioned padlock was either

lost or stolen. This is so securely fastened to the wall that if all the stocks are filled it cannot be pulled out of place. The late Canon Denton made enquiries, and found this was the only finger-stock left in a church.—W. W. S.

THE UPOLO BANK.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—Would the enclosed photographs interest any of your numerous readers? I have been interested very much for some years past in your photographs of sport from all parts of the world.—JAMES MILNE.

[The photographs are very interesting, and the following extract from a



FINGER-STOCKS.



CAUGHT BY HAND.

private letter to Mr. Milne gives a sufficient explanation of them. The letter is dated "Cairns, December 4th, 1912": "I have a friend who does a little amateur photography, and we had an opportunity of taking a few snap-shots of the birds—terns (*Sterna Fuliginosa*) to give them their correct name—at Upolo Bank on the Barrier Reef, which I told you about on one occasion. The Upolo Bank is a small sandbank, about six hundred yards long by one hundred yards wide, situated about twenty miles north-east by east of Cairns, and is at present covered with long, coarse grass. This has recently grown, as on previous trips it was practically bare. The birds were more numerous than I had seen before, and the different pictures show them in various positions. You will observe the eggs are clearly seen in some of the pictures. I gathered about twelve dozen off a space about twenty feet square. The birds are easily caught if rushed before they get a start to fly, especially in the long grass. When they are in the air their cries are deafening, and we had to talk by signs. All day and all night they are on the wing, uttering their harsh cries. They do not build any nest—simply lay an egg on the ground and sit on it. There appears to be one bird for every egg, and no guano is to be seen on the bank."—ED.]

THE PROFITS OF AGRICULTURE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May I suggest how necessary it is to urge the Government to appoint a Commission for investigating the true facts about the profits of agriculture? Some thousands of labourers' budgets have been printed; but what does the farmer



TERNS ON THE BARRIER REEF.

earn and what the landowner? I think it would calm the enthusiasm of some reformers if they knew the facts.—AGRESTIS.

SOFTNESS AND PARTIAL ABSENCE OF WALNUT SHELLS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

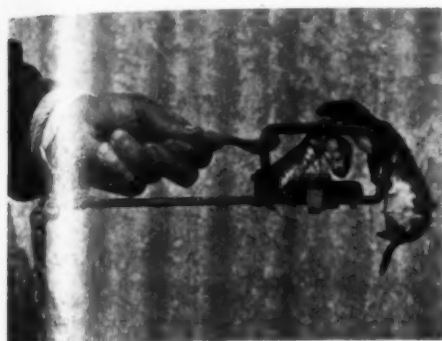
SIR,—I should be glad if you could give me a reason for the shells of walnuts from a fine tree in this garden being always soft on one side; indeed, there is practically no shell at all on one half. Should the nuts be gathered before quite ripe, or allowed to fall from the tree; and what is the best way of preserving them for use?—GRACE SAUNDERS.

[In all probability the softness of the shell is hereditary, and in that case nothing can be done. It is just possible, however, that it may be due to absence of lime in the soil, and it would be worth while adding some. One pound of slaked lime to each square yard of soil, extending outwards from the trunk as far as the spread of the branches, would be a good dressing. If this can be lightly forked in, so much the better. The walnuts ought not to be gathered until quite ripe, that is, when the outer husks leave the shells freely. They may then be knocked down with long poles; or if allowed to fall naturally, no harm will be done. The usual method of storing

is in clean sand, after all outer husks are removed. They keep well if buried in the sand by the side of a north wall, just so that frost is kept from them.—ED.]

WEASEL CARRYING YOUNG.

[TO THE EDITOR.]
SIR,—This photograph of a weasel caught in a trap while carrying her young



THE WEASEL CAUGHT WITH A YOUNG ONE.

one in her mouth may interest you. The large weasel was killed instantly, but the small one was alive when found, and, as is seen in the photograph, was still held firmly by the teeth of its parent.—G. HEELEY.

A SPORTING CAT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Though cats are proverbially fond of fish, and some have been known to do a little fishing on their own account, the one shown in the accompanying photograph is the first I have known to display an interest in another person's angling. So devoted is it to watching the sport that it invariably accompanies my wife to the river, following her from pool to pool and becoming much excited

when a fish is hooked. It is here seen taking a keen interest in the playing of a salmon. I fear its taste for angling is not entirely due to the love of sport, for it always expects to get some of the scales to eat after the fish has been landed. Its sporting proclivities are not confined to the river-side, for it also goes out shooting with us on the hill, in spite of the presence of two rather demonstrative spaniels, the attraction in this case being the occasional permission to lick the bleeding nose of a rabbit. From the first it has never been in the least gunshy, taking no notice whatever, even when the gun is fired close beside it.—N. MACLACHLAN.

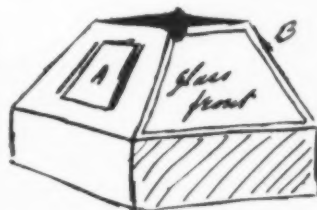


HOPE OF SALMON SCALES.

OLD BRASS LAMPS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to the two lamps illustrated in the correspondence portion of COUNTRY LIFE for March 8th, I beg to submit that they are ship's binnacle compass lamps, in use up to about twenty-five years ago. The binnacle tops were frequently shaped as shown in the photograph. The lamps were made detachable for the purpose of relighting and trimming; the faces were glazed and sloped to fit the slope of the top, with slides to secure them close to the corresponding glazed aperture in the binnacle top. The lamps threw their light on the card from each side, but the helmsman could see sufficiently well if one lamp happened to blow out. The lamps were necessarily of copper or brass throughout because of their non-magnetic qualities, and the burners, etc., were on gimbals on account of the rolling of the vessel, to ensure a steady light and to prevent spilling the oil.—A. ROWAND.



TOP OF OLD-FASHIONED BINNACLE.
A and B, glazed apertures with slides for lamps to slip on.

HORN SNUFFBOX.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photographs were taken of a very old snuffbox in the possession of a friend. It is made of horn, lined with tortoiseshell and mounted in silver. The hunting scenes are carved deeply, the animals themselves left white and the remainder of the horn stained dark brown.



THE CARVED LID OF THE SNUFFBOX.

The boar-hunt and the two scenes on each end are beautifully carved, the animals showing so much life and action. There is no record by which the history of the snuffbox can be traced, so it would be interesting to know if any of your readers can say if they know of any similar boxes and where they were made.—M. G. S. BEST.

[We illustrate the carved lid. The snuffbox is not very old or of English make, but of a type produced largely in South Germany and the Tyrol in the first half of the nineteenth century. The horn in this example seems to be carved, but more often the modelled ornament was pressed. Most museums possess similar objects.—ED.]

A BAT HIBERNATING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose three photographs which I took recently in a cave in the Wyndcliff, near Chepstow. The small one was taken with a hand-camera on March 8th (by magnesium light), and shows a bat hibernating. On Monday, March 10th, I revisited the cave with my stand-camera and took the two larger photographs, one showing the interior of the cave and the other a close view of the bat. There were several other bats and many moths hibernating in the large cave, but the bat shown was the only one which could be easily photographed. After taking the photograph (on Monday, March 10th) I gently stroked the hanging bat and it spread out its wings and again refolded itself as in the photograph. If viewed upside-down the bat looks like some uncanny animal walking.—ARTHUR J. LUMBERT.

[We have much pleasure in showing the photograph of the hibernating bat.—ED.]



THE BAT'S SLEEPING POSTURE.

A MARCH SWALLOW IN THE SCILLY ISLANDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was surprised to read in COUNTRY LIFE of March 15th of a swallow being seen at Teignmouth on March 8th, as one was also seen at Tresco in these islands on the same day. It would be interesting to know if any other members of this advance party have been observed. The black-headed gulls have left Scilly quite a month earlier than usual this year.—C. J. KING.

SKIN OF THE HIPPOPOTAMUS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Although it is a well-known fact that the hippopotamus possesses a very thick skin, yet the accompanying illustration will, I think, prove far more convincing than mere words. The photograph was taken after the skin had become dried, during which process it had shrunk fully half an inch. Nevertheless, it is still of considerable thickness, as may well be judged by comparison with the penny depicted in the picture. It should be pointed out that only the skin is

represented; all fat and flesh had been removed.—W. S. BERRIDGE.



HIPPOPOTAMUS SKIN AFTER SHRINKAGE IN DRYING.

grating to prevent trout from going up-stream. The trouble that the enquirer has seems to be to find a grating that will not get blocked with leaves and other *débris* going down the stream. If you have in your stream, or can contrive to make, a dam which will give you a fall of not less than a foot, it can be done very easily. Make the dam, and along the top of the dam lay a plank across the stream. Fix it down there and to this plank attach your grating, which should be laid nearly horizontally and should overhang the stream. It is best to make this grating of iron bars only—that is to say, with no outside frame, or bar running across the others—and the bars will all lie with their ends pointing down-stream, so that when the floods come they will wash everything out from between these, if anything should find a lodgment. The trout come to the dam as they work up-stream, then they try to jump or run up the water and are met and thrown back by the bars. The bars may be fixed down on the plank with staples, and over them may be run some cement to keep it all firm. The bars should project, beyond the overflow of the water, about a foot, not less, at the ordinary height of the stream, and should slope slightly downwards, so that the flood may wash them clear of leaves and so on the more easily.—J. H.

GRATING WHICH WILL NOT SILT UP FOR TROUT.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I was looking over some copies of COUNTRY LIFE, and in one for February 22nd I see an enquiry about a grating to prevent trout from going up-stream. The trouble that the enquirer has seems to be to find a grating that will not get blocked with leaves and other *débris* going down the stream. If you have in your stream, or can contrive to make, a dam which will give you a fall of not less than a foot, it can be done very easily. Make the dam, and along the top of the dam lay a plank across the stream. Fix it down there and to this plank attach your grating, which should be laid nearly horizontally and should overhang the stream. It is best to make this grating of iron bars only—that is to say, with no outside frame, or bar running across the others—and the bars will all lie with their ends pointing down-stream, so that when the floods come they will wash everything out from between these, if anything should find a lodgment. The trout come to the dam as they work up-stream, then they try to jump or run up the water and are met and thrown back by the bars. The bars may be fixed down on the plank with staples, and over them may be run some cement to keep it all firm. The bars should project, beyond the overflow of the water, about a foot, not less, at the ordinary height of the stream, and should slope slightly downwards, so that the flood may wash them clear of leaves and so on the more easily.—J. H.

HIS EVENING'S SPORT.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The photograph shows a dog trying to reach two cats in a tree by jumping. The branch where it joins the tree is just ten feet above the ground. The photograph was taken by flash-light at about 6.30 p.m. a few days ago. Perhaps the slight movement



AN OUT-OF-DOORS FLASH-LIGHT PHOTOGRAPH.

shown by the dog adds to the reality of the picture.—S. L. BENNETT.

A RING-DOVE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I send you a photograph of a ring-dove that has been in the possession of my wife for the last twenty-three years eight months. Of the history of this bird we know that it was originally brought from Alexandria, certainly not less

than twenty-five years ago. As will be seen in the picture, Jim is in excellent condition, and to strangers who dare to presume to tease him he is as combative as ever he was. He has been known to receive telegrams and congratulations from quite a wide circle of well-wishers.—ARTHUR J. WATERFIELD.



HALE AND HEARTY AT TWENTY-FIVE.

THE DATES OF THE SEASONS.

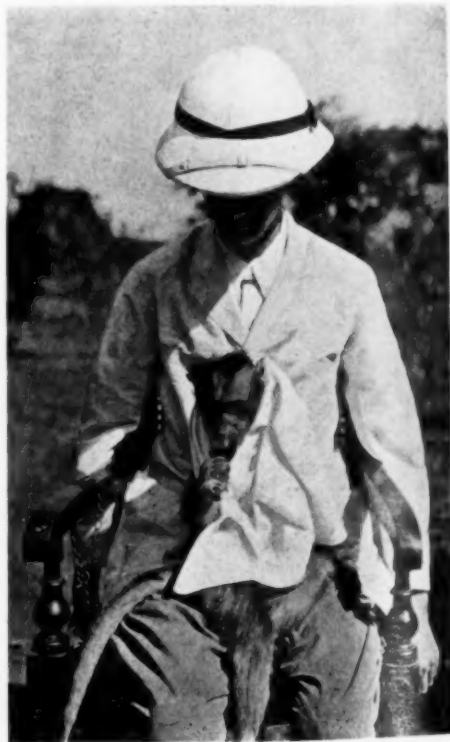
[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—A question has been put to me which, as I am wholly incapable of answering it "on my own," I should be greatly obliged if you would allow me to pass on to your columns to be solved or to be worried over by the readers of COUNTRY LIFE. It is the dates of the commencement and end of the four different seasons of the year—spring, summer, autumn, winter. Of course, we all know very well that if we look into any almanack we find this question answered for us. Take "Whitaker's Almanack" for example; we find there that spring begins on March 21st, summer on June 22nd, autumn on September 23rd and winter on December 22nd, as the sun in his courses visits the houses of the Ram, the Crab, the Scales and the Goat successively. That is a clear statement enough; but what we want to know is, on what authority does it rest? Very likely it is a question of great simplicity; the more easy then the answer, for which we shall not on that account be the less grateful; but it is also quite certain that the division of the seasons as given by the almanack is not at all identical with that which the ordinary Englishman carries for daily use in his head. He has, for instance, no idea of June as any other than a summer month. It would never occur to him naturally to speak of it as one of the months of spring; yet this is the season to which we have to ascribe it according to the record of the calendar. Neither would it occur to most of us to reckon September anywhere except among the autumn months, whereas here we find it placed under summer, except as regards its final week. And the calendar asks us to regard the whole of the latter part of the year, up to its very last week, as belonging to autumn; but in our usual way of thinking we are apt to regard Christmas and the New Year as about the date of mid-winter. It has to be confessed that the experience of most years shows us that we get the most wintry (if that is synonymous with the coldest) weather after, rather than before, the turn of the year; but the very fact that we regard this as worthy of note is a further indication that we look upon a considerable portion of the winter as put behind us by the time that we come to the turn of the year. It would be interesting to know how it has come about that the current ideas with regard to the seasons are so different from the dates given in the calendars.—HORACE G. HUTCHINSON.

TO THE MONKEY'S TASTE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The enclosed photograph of my monkey imbibing port wine at the early hour of 10 a.m. (!) may be of interest to your readers and considered worthy of a place in your paper.—ED. VERE LEVINGE.



HIS MORNING REFRESHER.

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